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AN EXAMINATION OF KARL MARX'S THEORY OF THE PROLETARIAT

By

Melvin H. Watson

B.A. (Morehouse College) 1930
M.A. (Oberlin College) 1932
S.D. (Oberlin Graduate School of Theology) 1933
M.S.T. (" " " " ") 1934

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment in the Department of Christian
Ethics of the requirements for
the Degree of
Doctor of Theology
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June, 1945

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FOREWORD

The aim of this study is to examine critically and evaluate the Marxian theory of the proletariat. This will include an investigation of the idea of the proletariat and its operation, an endeavor to understand to whom the designation "proletariat" refers, and the function of these people in society. What is the meaning of the idea of the proletariat? What happens when the idea is put to work? Who are the proletariat? What is the social significance of the proletariat as a class of people? These questions represent the scope of this study.

It will be deemed sufficient for the purpose here to confine our investigation to a treatment of the thought of Karl Marx, the "father of scientific socialism." We shall see how he arrived at his own system by accepting certain ideas in his background and formulating his objection to others. The rise of the two parties, the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks, in the pre-Revolutionary period in Russia will provide an illustration of the idea of the proletariat at work in society.

The apparent success of the Russian Revolution produced in the United States a renewed interest in Marx and Marxism. The second world war and the post-war period in which the Soviet Union has been such a powerful participant has done much to sustain this interest. If the peace is to be won decisively as was the war, it can hardly be doubted that a

greater understanding of the motivation of the Soviet Union, whose decisions in the councils of the nations today portend so much for tomorrow, is imperative. This greater understanding of the springs of action in the Soviet Union will justify itself if it leads to the formulation of national policies in the United States which, with due regard for the canons of national self-respect, contribute more effectively to bridging the grievous gap that currently separates the western democracies and the Soviet Union. This thesis represents an effort to understand more clearly an important segment of the Marxian system, the theory of the proletariat.

The thought and work of Karl Marx were very extensive. Marx received as a legacy his father's interest in philosophy and history. He secured a university education in preparation for a career as a university teacher. Failing to attain an appointment at the University of Bonn, Marx became a journalist. While still an editor he was launched into an examination of the principles and history of economic development and was gradually drawn into politics. The study, therefore, of most of Marx's lifework falls within the fields covered by sociology and history. This fact raises the question of the objectives and methods fundamental to research in the fields of sociology and history. To a discussion of this question let us now turn.

CHAPTER I

METHODOLOGY

1. Research Methods in the Fields of History and Sociology

a. Common Sense

Prior to theoretical inquiry, all objects enjoy that status which common sense accords to them. Common sense is the pre-analytic data of science and philosophy. These data are objects plus the ordinary opinions and beliefs which cling to them. The source of common sense knowledge is experience of the most fundamental and pervasive character, minimal biological, social, and psychological experience of man. All that is necessary for its acquisition is the exercise of the senses and the memory, and the simplest kind of reasoning. Common sense is acquired by us willy-nilly, and not in view of any method. It results not from inquiry but from merely living. It is completely uncritical and there is no knowledge more elementary than it. Therefore common sense is the starting point of all inquiry.

As a principle it may be stated that science grows out of common sense, but also away from it. At the level of common sense, judgments concerning the objects of existence and the objects of value are not made as a result of dispassionate

and disinterested inquiry, but rather in view of everyone's persuasions regarding them. But if such persuasions are prejudiced, infected with human gullibility or personal idiosyncrasy, habitual discourse or prevailing dogma, their original claim to certainty obviously rests on sand. Just as art takes the material nature supplies and in the end adapts this material to its own forms and designs, in like manner science and philosophy, though they begin by accommodating themselves to common sense, end by accommodating common sense to their hypotheses and theories.

The scientific method, as it has come to be perfected and extended, represents man's mastery over the irrational tendencies which are deeply rooted in the human spirit. In developing it, he has succeeded in transforming himself as well as his world. Through the use of that method he has steadily advanced from thoughtless credulity and from narrow dogmatism to open-mindedness. With respect to the objects of ordinary experience, the scientific method has created order out of chaos by classifying, measuring, correlating, and explaining things. Thus it has effected transformation in human opinions and in the objects of common sense.

b. The Scientific Method

The term "science" is frequently used as a kind of group designation for the various natural and social sciences. So viewed the materials with which it deals may be rocks or stars,

plants, living organisms, or social institutions.

The term "science" as more accurately used refers to a certain way of working toward an objective. While the several sciences work with different material, they are united in the use of the same method in dealing with that material. Viewed in this more correct sense, science represents the attainment of knowledge through: 1) exact observation, and 2) logical arrangement of facts. Let us review certain major characteristics of the general procedure followed by the sciences in their work. In many respects these seem only to extend and to systematize the methods of ordinary common-sense knowledge.

c. Observation

When relatively little is known about a subject it often seems easy to construct theories which will serve as adequate explanation. Knowing little about the real magnitude of the heavens, the Ptolemaic astronomers devised a fairly simple explanation by means of arrangements of circles. But an increasing knowledge of facts caused additions and complications in Ptolemaic astronomy until its entire structure was ready to fall of its own weight before the relatively simpler account of Copernicus.

The modern scientist bends efforts to include as wide a range of relevant data as possible, and is persistent in making and checking observations taken, if possible, over a period of time and by numerous observers. The final theory is the

product of observation, which sought the most exhaustive knowledge of facts obtainable, and imagination, which grasps the pattern as a whole.

d. Systematization

No fact, viewed by and for itself alone, is a scientific fact, for scientific knowledge always has to do with the order in which, or the law according to which, things are connected with one another. Therefore it may be said that scientific investigation in general assumes that things are connected with one another, and further, that these connections are of such a kind that the mind can understand and systematize them by its processes of rational thought. In other words, science is interested in general principles. In the process of systematization, by which a particular fact is related to other facts within an order, several stages are to be noted, particularly those of enumeration, measurement, and logical synthesis.

1). Enumeration. There is no simpler way of putting things together in an order than by counting them. When we count things, we employ a numerical system, in which numbers are related in a series, preceding or succeeding one another according to a fixed law of the weries. Things must have at least one aspect in common in relation to which they may be counted together. Statistics which show the numbers of members in the various classes will, of course, be in error, if

individual facts or items are put together in the wrong way. Again, error will occur when groups of facts are inferred to be related because numerically they correspond or vary with one another. Enumeration and apparent correlations based upon it are not in themselves sufficient basis for looking upon facts as systematically related to one another.

2). Measurement. The exactness of enumeration in many instances may be greatly increased by more careful methods of measurement. Counting and measuring together may be regarded as constituting the primary means of securing exact scientific descriptions. As any science approaches exactness as an ideal, it must come to deal with its material more and more fully in mathematical terms. In physics, chemistry, and astronomy a high degree of exactness has been attained. In biology, geology, and botany a lesser degree has been reached, and still less in the relatively new sciences of psychology and sociology.

In measuring, the aim is to find the exact relationship of some particular objects to all objects that can be similarly weighed. Then having found their place in the series of all extended, or all massive objects, we shall be able to deal with them in ways which otherwise would not be possible. Thus when the weight of a grain of sand is computed, it may in turn be related in a numerical series of weights to that of a boulder or (by estimation) to that of a distant star, etc. While

the sciences, in order to carry forth their work of systematization, must assume absolute order in the physical world, it must be remembered that our ordinary experiences and our most accurate measurements fail to show absolute uniformity.

3). *Logical Synthesis*. The sciences have advanced by means of two forms of activity: a) the discovery of new facts, and b) the discovery of systems by which the facts already known may be so related as to give new knowledge. So science is busy replacing one system of explanation with another. That system of explanation is considered best which, among the simplified explanations, appears to do justice to the facts and values. Furthermore, it must be self-consistent, and consistent with all established facts.

e. *Sociological Method*

In the appendix of the first volume of *An American Dilemma*, Gunnar Myrdal, extolling the ordinary American as a rationalistic being, moves on to say,

> In the social sciences, for instance, the American has, more courageously than anywhere else on the globe, started to measure, not only human intelligence, aptitudes, and personality traits, but moral leanings, and the "goodness" of communities.

The method of the social sciences does not conform strictly to the procedure outlines above. Laboratory methods are impracticable because events are not isolatable or reproducible at will. They cannot be detached from their natural milieu and varied arbitrarily like physical facts.

Conditions of life and of sociation, to say nothing of a problem in valuation, preclude the possibility of such manipulations. But this does not prevent us from classifying and counting events, from grouping them mentally as if such segregations really existed in nature. In an article discussing the roots of social knowledge, Cooley writes:

> In dealing with things sensation is the main source of the raw material which the mind works up into knowledge; in dealing with men it serves chiefly as a means of communication, as an inlet for symbols which awaken a complex inner life not primarily sensuous at all. In the one case it is our principle instrument; in the other only ancillary.[1]

The chapter on Sociology in the book edited by Wilson Gee, entitled *Research in the Social Sciences*, is written by Park. It discusses in a simple manner the use which the field of Sociology can make of scientific method. What follows is a digest of the chapter.

Mathematics makes the nearest approach to a general science of method. The conceptual exactness of mathematics and the wide application that it has found in the other sciences is due to the fact that it has limited itself to the most obvious characteristics of things; namely, their form and ordered sequence. What things are for any special science or even for common sense depends largely upon the locus from which they are viewed. Statistics have been the method par

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[1] C. H. Cooley, *American Journal of Sociology*, July 1926, p. 60.

excellence of the social sciences in their effort to be systematic and to approach the goal of quantitative exactness.

The author suggests that our original datum is always an event, and that the first task of every science is to convert events into things, things it proposes to study. Now looked at conceptually societies become things, things with a natural history and with characteristics which are determined by the interactions and mutual relations of the persons who compose them. Park accepts Comte's and Spencer's definitions of society as being mutually supporting rather than mutually exclusive definitions. Both men agree that society is a "social organism," but they disagree in their determination of "social." For Spencer the essential relations between men which constitute them as a society are best represented in the division of labor. Competition, which is the fundamental fact of social life, enforces cooperation, and society is the outcome. For Comte society is primarily a cultural group, having common customs, language and institutions. While there are instances when individuals do act independently, consensus is the fundamental fact of social life.

The word community more accurately describes the social organism, as Spencer conceived it. Community, in the broadest sense of that term, has a spacial and a geographical connotation. Every community has a location, and the individuals who compose it have a place of residence within the territory

which the community occupies. Society, however, always includes something more than competitive cooperation and its resulting economic interdependence. The existence of a society presupposes a certain amount of solidarity, consensus, and common purpose. They grow up in the effort of individuals to act collectively. The community, although it is not always identical with society, is the physical base for it, providing its economic organization and the conditions necessary for its existence.

Now the community can be taken as a unit of intense and first hand study. The distribution and density of the community's population may be demonstrated quantitatively. Again, community mobility may be made the subject of quantitative investigation. All the movements, migrations, commerce, and changes of location that take place within the community may be taken as an index of social change and may therefore have general significance for the future. Discussing this point, Park writes:

> It is evident that the areas of an urban community can be characterized, in the manner indicated, to an unlimited extent. Perhaps not all but most facts that can be stated statistically, once they have been plotted in their conceptual scheme—this ecological frame of reference—can be made the basis of general statements which may be eventually reduced to abstract formulae and scientific generalization.[2]

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[2] Wilson Gee, ed., Research in the Social Sciences, p. 32.

But the sociologist, according to Park, is concerned not only with the community and its population, land and mobility, but with individuals and families who participate in and are a part of the society that he is seeking to investigate. By means of interviews or by use of intimate personal documents, the sociologist can build up individual life histories or family histories. In these investigations values and meanings are very important. So while admitting that the data involving life histories can be studied systematically, the author concludes that they require another and a different technique from the statistical method. Thus ends Park's analysis.

The serious limitation of the statistical method is that statisticians have usually treated persons as if they were mere physical units, and societies as if they were mere physical aggregates. Statistics is a method of manipulation, not of perception. In an article titled, "The 'scientific human" in social research," Odum[3] writes of what he terms the telic character of social research.

In bold contrast to Park's position is the one taken by MacIver[4] who holds that there are three great dynamic realms, the physical realm, the realm of organic being, and the realm of conscious being, constituting the whole reign of nature.

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3. Howard W. Odum, Social Forces, March 1929, p. 340f.

4. See R. M. MacIver's book, Social Causation, p. 269f.

These realms are interrelated, the realm of conscious being gracing its causal nexus through the other two. Three orders compose the realm of conscious being; the cultural order characterized by a value configuration, the technological order characterized by specifically utilitarian techniques, and the social order characterized by a pattern of social relationships. The major concern of the social scientist, then, is in the causation of phenomena peculiar to the social order. This means he must investigate "the manner in which these phenomena depend on the conjuncture of factors belonging to all the dynamic realms." Here is an approach which holds the promise of highly rewarding research in the field of the social sciences.

f. Historical Method

In the chapter referred to above, Park affirms that because it has been a record of events rather than a description of things, history has given sociology much, if not most, of its subject matter. In an article, Isabella McLaughlin[5] argues that history collects the concrete and valid and interprets the unique; sociology, working from hypotheses, classifies and arranges data in categories in an attempt to discover and formulate the typical. Schlesinger wrote the chapter on History in Research in the Social Sciences, edited by Gee. In his view, history, strictly speaking, has no content of

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[5] Isabella C. McLaughlin, American Journal of Sociology, November 1926, p. 379f.

its own; it is a method of inquiry. History is always the history of something, not a study apart. In the modern period history focused its attention upon government and politics, and it is becoming concerned with the totality of man's experiences in the past. Regarding the status of history as a science, Schlesinger says:

> The question of whether History is a science has long been a favorite subject for disputation among dialecticians in the social fields. Yet the issue seems simple enough. If the term is confined to subjects where the phenomena operate in accordance with fixed law, History has not yet established its right to the label. If it attaches only to subjects in which the conclusions can be tested by experimental verification, obviously History is not so to be classed. But if the term may be applied to fields in which the methods of inquiry are critical and objective and the results win a consensus of acceptance by trained investigators, then History deserves the name as much as any branch of physical science.[6]

Statistics is a handmaid of history as it is of sociology. The historian uses the statistical method as a means of extracting the significant truths concealed in masses of numerical facts. The weakness of the approach has already been mentioned above.

The results achieved by critical methodology in the field of Political History have been very valuable. Political History gives almost exclusive attention to documented facts. such as statutes, decrees, treaties, constitutions, and other formal pronouncements. The presence of such documented

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6. Wilson Gee, ed., op. cit., p. 230.

materials increases the opportunity for objective investigation, but it is often true that the most profound sentiments of a people in any given period are not fully reflected in their formal documents. Thus the historian has to guard against a misleading emphasis upon documentation.

In a book edited by S. J. Case, E. F. Scott[7] has written a chapter in which he discusses the limitations of the historical method. Four of the limitations treated in the chapter are here listed:

1. History is concerned with origins, and it often mistakes the causes and concomitants for the thing itself. The result is something different from the process which has led up to it.

2. Granting, however, that the thing can be rightly judged only in the light of its origins, we have to recognize that they never can be determined with absolute precision. Historical material is by nature elusive and infinitely complex.

3. Historical method rarely shakes itself completely free of the fallacy that the ideas of one age have just the same significance when they have passed over into another.

4. in its emphasis on genetic relations historical method proceeds on the assumption that all has come about through the

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[7] S. J. Case, ed., Studies in Early Christianity, pp. 3-20.

influence of one system of thought upon another. No fallacy is more subtle and more fruitful of error than that which assumes that likeness must necessarily involve borrowing.

Dr. C. C. McCown makes use of the genetic method. In his book, The Genesis of the Social Gospel, the author determines to discover whether Jesus had a social gospel, and, if so, what its basic meaning is. He proposes to accomplish his assignment by viewing the interpretation of Jesus as "a purely historical problem to be approached by the strictest methods of historical investigation." This requires specifically, (1) a critical examination of all sources used, (2) a genetic and functional interpretation of the historical data, and (3) the study of each historical problem in its total social milieu. With particular reference to the question of the ethical and social ideals of Jesus, the strict historical approach requires that we understand what his forebears and contemporaries thought about the poor and the rich, about the kingdom of God and its coming, and about Jesus' messianic function. Thus Dr. McCown asserts,

> A careful study of the apocalypses and other Jewish writings, canonical and non-canonical, which date from the three centuries between 200 B.C. and 100 A.D. becomes, therefore, a sine qua non for the understanding of Jesus and primitive Christianity.[8]

When he speaks of the poor, Jesus often employs language which was used by prophets, psalmists, and apocalyptists, and so it

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8. Dr. C. C. McCown, The Genesis of the Social Gospel, p. 34.

is necessary to know something of their religious and ethical ideals, according to Dr. McCown, as well as something of the geographical conditions amid which they lived. A further step is necessary. Since great civilizations flourished before Palestine became of historical significance, some knowledge of those civilizations which were geographically related to Palestine would deepen the understanding of the practices and ideals of the prophets and reformers of Palestine. Undoubtedly this small country learned much from the culture of the powerful countries that surrounded it. Thus by tracing the development of the social ideals of the Hebrews and the Jews throughout their history, in their "culture complex," the author makes possible a deeper understanding of these ideals and their meaning.

Schlesinger has a word about the limitation of the historical method:

> But he [the historian] usually assumes that the objectivity, to which he himself aspires as an ideal, is a quality which he possesses in fact. This is a dubious assumption when, as historians know, the foremost thinkers in all ages were fettered by their times, by their social sympathies, economic wants or partisan bias, and when, as any psychologist knows, the finest intentions of conscious intelligence are likely to be ambushed by influences of which it may be wholly ignorant.[9]

We move next to a brief consideration of valuations and beliefs in research.

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[9] Wilson Gee, ed., op. cit., p. 231.

g. Valuations and Beliefs in Research

In How We Think, Professor Dewey points out that reflection implies a belief (or disbelief) in something beyond itself by which its value is tested. Reflection depends upon a "ground of belief" which may not always be apparent, but which is necessary to the thinking process.[10] Myrdal offers a clear distinction between beliefs and valuations in the following passage:

> People have ideas about how reality actually is, or was, and they have ideas about how it ought to be, or ought to have been. The former we call "beliefs." The latter we call "valuations." A person's beliefs, that is, his knowledge can be objectively judged to be true or false and more or less complete. His valuations—that a social situation or relation is, or was, "just," "right," "fair," "desirable," or the opposite in some degree of intensity or the other—cannot be judged by such objective standards as science provides.[11]

If we are of the opinion that, generally speaking, people do not distinguish between what they think they know and what they like or dislike, then we must be reminded that there is nothing in the mere fact of thought as identical with belief which reveals whether the belief is well founded or not. So a conscious and voluntary effort must be put forth to establish belief upon a firm basis of evidence and rationality. Intellectual integrity requires consistency and harmony in

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[10] John Dewey, How We Think, p. 8f.

[11] Gunner Myrdal, An American Dilemma, II, 1027.

our beliefs. No one can use two inconsistent mental standards without falling into mental confusion.

Daily experience teaches us, however, that people's "ideas about how reality actually is, or was," are profoundly colored by racial, group, environmental, and individual inheritances. This fact makes it extremely difficult for them to discover and retain any logical order of valuations. While people do not deliberately set about to deceive themselves, they are besieged by conflicting valuations, some of which are worth more than others. Free of the kind of encumbrances which are mentioned above, people could be expected to make choice of their beliefs and actions in view of the most general valuations. But in daily experience they will be found to play up and down the scale of valuations. While giving attention to certain valuations, the others go unnoticed. The expressed valuations and beliefs offered as motives for specific action or inaction are determined by what is prudent under the circumstances. The real reason is often not the expressed "reason." The expressed "reason" is sometimes the means whereby persons deceive themselves into a standpoint which saves their own feelings of what is right and also permits them to have or to do what they want.

The totality of one's valuations is never present in conscious apperception. Some parts of it may even be constantly suppressed from awareness. It is the conflict between

valuations which reflects the moral struggle going on within the individual. When men make moral criticisms of each other, the more general valuations are employed, because of their universality and their prestige. The individual subjected to criticism, embarrassed for the moment, will immediately seek to compose the difference between his action and the valuation in view of which he was criticized. Since the belief or behavior for which the individual was criticized was very likely the consequence of conflicting valuations, he finds himself involved in the business of trying to reconcile illogicalities by logical reasoning. And here Myrdal has a word which relates the discussion in this section to the problem of research in the social sciences:

> The beliefs are thus not only determined by available scientific knowledge in society and the efficacy of the means of its communication to various population groups but are regularly "biased," by which we mean that they are systematically twisted in the one direction which fits them best for purposes of rationalization.[12]

Now we move in order to the problem of bias and its elimination from the processes of research. Is objectivity in the social sciences impossible of achievement? How does the investigator rid himself of his biases?

h. Valuation and Facts in Research

In her book, Introduction to Psychology, Calkins divides

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[12] Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma, II, 1030.

"facts" into two great classes: "Selves and Facts-for-the-Selves." She divides the second class into two parts: first, the internal facts or inner events, consisting of precepts, images, memories, thoughts, emotions and volitions; and secondly, the external or physical facts, consisting of things and the outside world. The author is confident that individuals make sharp distinctions between selves and all other facts and also that there is opposition of their feelings, precepts and thoughts, the inner phenomena, to the outside things and events. This antagonism between the inner phenomena, and the outside things and events arises because the inner facts, the memories, the emotions and all the rest are realized as private, unshared experience belonging to the individual alone. On the other hand, the things or events are public facts, shared with an unlimited number of other selves.[13] It would appear, then, that inner facts have a pronounced influence on the explanation of outer facts. Landheer's discussion of presuppositions in the social sciences is relevant to what Calkins has said. His position is as follows:

> The social sciences at present are suffering from methodological confusion. Much of what passes for social science is social philosophy. On the other hand, the mere accumulation of facts does not lead to understanding. The awareness of the point of view of the scientist, which underlies the interpretation of his findings, is one of the most

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[13] Mary W. Calkins, An Introduction to Psychology, p. 5f. See also Dewey's discussion of facts and meanings, How We Think, p. 79; and R. M. MacIver's Social Causation, pp. 185, 271f.

> significant methodological tasks.... The question of evaluation is, therefore, the central one in scientific method in the social sciences.[14]

Schlesinger asserts that in a work of historical scholarship, the author might well devote his introduction to an exposition of his presuppositions. Myrdal contributes to this point of view when he argues that the social scientist, even when he is exerting the most honest determination to be open-minded, is a part of the culture in which he lives, and that he never succeeds in freeing himself entirely from dependence on the dominant preconceptions and biases of his environment. What's more, every individual investigator is himself more or less entangled, both as a private person and as a responsible citizen, in the web of conflicting valuations.[15]

Bias in social science research manifests itself in the objects chosen for research, the selection of relevant data, the recording of observations, the theoretical and practical inferences drawn, and the manner of presentation of results. The evidence of biases in social science research is to be found in logical flaws in inferences and in inconclusive inferences. Where biases have influenced the observations themselves so that the observed data was wrongly perceived and recorded, it becomes necessary to repeat the observations. Where biases have influenced the selection of data collected,

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14. Barth Landheer, American Journal of Sociology, January 1932, p. 539.
15. Myrdal, op. cit., II, 1035.

> [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

viewpoints and hypotheses applied or the delimiting of the field of study, it becomes necessary to apply alternative hypotheses and to extend the range of research to include the neglected fields.

Now, specifically, what are biases? They are, according to Myrdal, the implicit and unannounced valuations that hinder observation and inference from becoming truly objective. They are valuations concealed in the data of research that distort the processes of research and the conclusions reached. They are suppressed valuations that diffuse emotion and irrationality through the whole system of research activity. Biases generally set a standard of relevance and significance in research.

The methods by which research in social science is relieved of the poisoning influence of biases are simple. In treating this point Myrdal deals first with the negative angle. Biases in social science cannot be mitigated simply by sticking to the facts (stress on factual research) and by statistical treatment. Even apparently simple concepts presume elaborate theories which themselves necessarily contain elements of a priori speculation. Again, biases in social science cannot be mitigated by the method of refusing to draw practical conclusions from the phenomena examined. The social scientist's adherence to this rule of procedure is arbitrary and is detrimental to true scientific objectivity, because our

whole literature is permeated with value judgments and the terminology of social science (the tools of research) encounters valuations.[16]

On the positive side of the question, Schlesinger, discussing the ground of objectivity in historical research, says,

> Is objectivity, then, an impossible achievement? In an absolute sense, yes; for both the conception of a situation and the inferences of the historian are conditioned by his whole personality, which in turn is the product of his original endowment plus his life experience. But relatively speaking, he may count on advancing the outposts of knowledge if he will subject his own mental processes to the same critical scrutiny that he does the source data with which he works.[17]

Myrdal's contribution on this point is that the social scientist must introduce, at the beginning of his research activity, explicit value premises. The use of explicit value premises will serve three main purposes: first, to purge as far as possible the scientific investigation of distorting biases; secondly, to determine in a rational way the statement of problems and the definition of terms for the theoretical analysis; thirdly, to lay a logical basis for practical and political conclusions. The essence of Myrdal's position is caught up in the following quotation:

> There is no other device for excluding biases in social science than to face the valuations and to introduce them as explicitly stated, specific, and sufficiently concretized value premises.[18]

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[16] Myrdal, op. cit., II, 1041.
[17] Gee, ed., op. cit., p. 232.
[18] Myrdal, op. cit., II, 1043.

> The observation of the facts of a given existing situation alone will never permit the conclusion that such a situation is good or desirable or even that this situation is inevitable in the future. In other words, we are making a plea for explicit value premises. The relation between these two desiderata is this, that it is the hidden valuations which give entrance to biases in social science.[19]

If this requirement would seem to lay a heavy moral burden upon the social scientist, the author argues that the full weight of moral responsibility rests upon the social scientist at any rate, whether he chooses to make his value premises explicit or not. It can be added that, under the influence of the view set forth here, social science might reasonably expect to achieve its most fruitful results.

The scope of this thesis has been outlined, and some of the more fruitful methods and objectives basic to sociological and historical research have been reviewed. The reader may be aided in his evaluation of this study by knowing something about the presuppositions of the writer. An effort is made to set forth the more important ones in the following section.

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[19] Myrdal, op. cit., II, 1057.

2. Introspective Portrait

The rich Hebraic-Christian tradition forms a profound aspect of my social inheritance. I believe in God as creator of the universe, the ultimate reality upon which all things depend. In the teaching, life, death and resurrection of Jesus is offered a unique and convincing revelation of God. In Jesus is found no explicit speculation; the reality of God is assumed. Jesus was taught from early childhood that God is one God; the God of creation and of history, known by his deeds. Since God created all men, all men are of indefeasible worth. God is both God the Almighty and God the Merciful. Jesus himself had repeated experiences of the goodness of God. But above all he discovered that God satisfied within himself the full round of man's religious needs. God is sufficient; man need only clear the way of all those impediments which block the flow of divine grace. Thus Jesus sought union with God through the complete subordination of his will to God's will. Viewing God's will as wholly good, Jesus freely accepted God's will as his own will. To know God's will became the supreme quest of his life.

Now the fundamental teaching of Jesus lies in his teaching of the Kingdom of God. The idea of Kingdom refers to the ruling, those ruled, and the territory rules over. The Kingdom of God means the rule of God, and the rule of God is most significantly understood as the arrangement by which God's

will becomes operative in history.

It seems clear, from a reading of the gospels, that Jesus interpreted God's central purpose to be that of making a universe, the developing of an inclusive world where all walls of partition would be broken down. This is the gospel which Jesus preached. He sought to make God's purpose a reality in life by making friends of men, a fact which the Christian evangelists did not miss. "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his master doeth: but I have called you friends." "Ye are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you." Those who are not friends belong to another realm, another system of relationships. When the fourth gospel refers to the friends of Jesus Christ, it describes them as being in union with him, organically members of his body, and by this relationship being distinguished from his enemies. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." They who are the friends of Jesus Christ find in him the source of all their wealth and being, the fulfillment of all their needs.

It is very important to understand here that the union of the friends to Jesus Christ is not a mechanical one, but a functional relationship. The union is demonstrated to the world by the way the friends function in the world. As Jesus Christ is in union with God through full and free acceptance

of his will, so the friends of Jesus Christ are in union with him. Through example and teaching Jesus has provided living evidence of the reality of the Kingdom. The friends are the eye, ear and hand of Jesus Christ, both to protect and increase his dominion. Again, the friends give witness to their union with Jesus Christ by taking up their cross. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." They have taken up their cross who have assumed their responsibility to be unselfishly helpful to the victim on the Jericho road, who have identified themselves with their dispossessed and suffering fellowmen; the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and imprisoned. It is as normal for the friends of Jesus Christ to function in ways that are sympathetic and redemptive as it is for a good tree to bring forth good fruit. They who take up their cross are not afraid of pain, but accept it as their portion when necessary. They, indeed, are the friends of Jesus Christ who in the world in which they live and move are purveyors of God's grace. They exercise the authority exercised by Jesus Christ and show in their face the same glory which was revealed in his. They who claim to be friends of Jesus Christ and do not exercise the authority of Jesus Christ (the act of reconciling men to God through the spirit of sympathy, service, and suffering) wherever they live are as unworthy stewards and shall receive their reward accordingly. It is well to reiterate the point

here that Jesus interprets the will of God as being determined to make a community of His children, through the spread of His grace. And the spread of God's grace depends upon how the friends of Jesus Christ, those who are of His own body, take up their cross—identify themselves with the neglected and suffering.

They who do not take up their cross, although they may pretend to do so, are not friends of Jesus Christ, therefore they sustain no corporate relationship to Him. They are of another rule, rival to that of Jesus Christ and God. They are as a tree that bringeth forth bad fruit, an enemy who sows tares in an already planted field. It is they who prevent God's rule from becoming an inclusive rule. They, too, shall receive their reward, for they shall be cast into outer darkness.

The above is, in brief, an interpretation of my religious inheritance which to me is meaningful and represents a commitment. Necessarily it will be in the background as I appraise any social order in general and that order advocated by the Marxian system in particular. The further fact that my lot has been cast in the part of the world in which the democratic philosophy (i.e., respect for personal worth, "without regard for birth, wealth or social position"; the proposition "that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are

life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness") is the dominant ideal in matters of government and politics can be expected to form a part of the context out of which arises my valuation of social relations and political institutions. The subject chosen for examination, the Marxian theory of the proletariat, suggests an arbitrary and individual interest and may reveal as well a certain social sympathy on the part of the writer. I say arbitrary, because no one forced me to launch upon the investigation of this question. It seemed to me that among the many problems which presented themselves to me as relevant, the opportunity to examine this one aroused greatest interest in me at this time. Further, it is my opinion that the more spacious area of hope for the preservation and redemption of our society is to be found among the great working masses, primarily because they, in the years of their experience, have known both the pain and glory of struggle, and therefore may not be so reluctant to accept the rigors necessarily connected with the struggle for a new and braver world. And, moreover, where these masses have had their spirit refined, cultivated, and made more highly sensitized by the struggle, they are the carriers in their persons of a sympathetic understanding, tolerance, and a catholic view of life which, in my way of thinking, represent the qualities essential to a world in which it is possible for men to be more fully conscious of their sonship to God and of their kinship to their fellowmen.

Having presented this list of mental attitudes, it must be added that a sincere effort is made in this study to approach and report the data relevant to the problem with a dispassionate attitude, in an effort to assure the integrity of the work. This total procedure, it would appear, is in strict accordance with the canons of the scientific approach.

CHAPTER II

KARL MARX AND THE PROLETARIAT

1. The Roots of Marxism

a. The Rise of Socialism

In the history of society institutions and social philosophies arrive only when the objective conditions necessary to their appearance have been established. Socialism as a stage in the evolution of society could appear only when external circumstances were suitable. In accounting for the rise of socialism we shall at the same time be describing the background of Karl Marx. Of the objective conditions favoring the rise of socialism, the most essential condition was the development of the great industrialism which, after a long period of preparation and gradual growth, began to reach its culmination in the eighteenth century.[1] Under this system industry was organized into a tremendous social operation, the benefits of which were appropriated by the owners of capital.

A series of mechanical inventions enormously increased the productive powers of England. In 1770 Hargreaves' "spinning jenny" was patented and in 1771 Arkwright invented his

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[1] The rise of Communism in Russia which followed feudalism violates the Marxian schedule, and must be termed a social "accident." In this instance, a combination of social forces, including a World War, were operative which made a "leap" possible.

"water frame," a patent spinning machine driven by water power. Combining the principles involved in both of these machines, Crompton came forth in 1779 with the "mule". These inventions alone really caused a revolution in the spinning industry. Weaving, however, had still to be done by hand. In 1785, when Dr. Cartwright, a minister, invented a "power loom" it became possible to weave by machinery. The industrial revolution came to its climax, as far as inventions were concerned, when Watt introduced his steam engine in the cotton industry in the same year Cartwright's invention appeared.

The industrial revolution completely transformed British industry, greatly increasing the wealth of England and filling the coffers of the manufacturers. Inventions came on so rapidly that the industries were unable to make a normal adjustment to the changes. Thus the industrial revolution brought in a period of unemployment, misery and starvation. Because of the expense of introducing the machines and the impossibility of competing with them by the old methods of production, the small manufacturers were forced into bankruptcy and on into the army of wage-workers, thus increasing the woe of the times. But probably the worst of all the results of the new industrial order was the destruction of the personal relations which had formerly existed between the employers and their employees.

The industrial revolution brought child labor in its train. It was discovered that a child at one of the new looms could do more than a dozen men had done under the old conditions,

and a tremendous demand for child workers was the result. It mattered not that self-respecting parents would not permit their children to work in the factories; the manufacturers found ways to get children. They got them from the workhouses. Under the pretext that they were going to apprentice them to a trade, the manufacturers arranged with the overseers of the poor children regular days for the inspection of these workhouse children. Those chosen were taken away to become the slaves of the new industrial system. As appalling poverty became widespread poor parents, against their will, found it necessary to permit their children to go into the factories. Thus child wage-workers became common. Fathers were unemployed and frequently took meals to the children who were. General distress followed in the wake of the industrial revolution.

Accompanying the industrial revolution was a revolution in the world of ideas which was just as necessary as a condition preparatory to socialism. Here one turns from England to France, the home of the great utopians of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The French utopians and the French Revolution of 1789 are produced by the same major forces. Louis XIV (1643-1715), in a long irresponsible reign, had aroused the strong indignation of the miserable peasants. More profligate was the reign of the succeeding king, Louis XV (1715-1774). The resentment of the peasants was expressed

by Voltaire and Rousseau. Rejecting revolutionary change, Voltaire (1694-1778) gave expression to his concern for the poor and social salvation through an emphasis upon freedom of thought and cultivation of the individual life. Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) in his treatise on society opens with the words, "Man is born free, yet everywhere he is in chains." He discredited the nostrums of the intelligentsia and urged the abolition of the monarchial system. Rousseau took the position that property was a violation of natural rights to which most of the evils, injustices, and inequalities in society could be traced. Thus he advocated the abolition of private property.

Rousseau died before the French Revolution had begun and yet many of his views concerning property were developed by the anarchists and socialists who worked during the next one hundred and fifty years. The change of thought symbolized in the French Revolution made Reason the supreme judge and became identified by the appeal to freedom. It was represented in the field of economics by the school of Adam Smith. The influence of the teachings of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Sir William Petty (1623-1687) and John Locke (1632-1704) can be traced in the thought of Adam Smith. For Aquinas the utility of an object might be expected to vary depending upon the need of a given individual. More important, however, is the fact that the medieval notion of the "just price" tied value inseparably

to the value of the labor of the craftsman as judged by the standards of customs and status. The thought of Petty at this point is characterized by a quotation which is frequently used, "While labor is the father and active principle of wealth, earth is the mother." Apparently his effort was to reduce labor and land to a single unit. He recognized that supply and demand account for the rise and fall of market values. According to Locke, labor is the most exclusive source of value. Land as such was valueless and required the application of labor to produce value at all. Capital was described as labor stored up in tools and equipment. In the writings of Locke and Petty we have the background of later labor theories of value and a mercantilist influence leading directly to the ideas of Adam Smith and the English Classical school.[2]

A French banker, Richard Cantillon (1689-1734), published an _Essay upon the Nature of Commerce in General_, in 1755, which greatly influenced the thinking of Adam Smith (1723-1790). Smith was also indebted to the writings of the philosophers of the 17th and 18th centuries, and the French Physiocrats. In 1776 he published his own book, known as _An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations_, a comprehensive treatment of political economy. In the beginning Smith made a distinction between value in use and value in exchange, and

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2. Lewis H. Haney, _History of Economic Thought_, p. 120.

they are kept separate. These two values are characteristically, unequal. Smith expounds the labor theory of value, although not in an absolute sense. His position, briefly states, is:

> The value of any commodity, therefore, to the person who possesses it, and who means not to use or consume it himself, but to exchange it for other commodities, is equal to the quantity of labor which it enables him to purchase or command. Labor, therefore, is the real measure of the exchangeable value of commodities. [3]

According to Adam Smith, gold and silver vary in the amount of labor they may purchase, while the quantity of labor necessary to produce a commodity varies but little from time to time. Thus labor value is the real estimate of value and money value is the nominal price. It should be remembered, however, that the evaluation of labor is not on a merely quantitative basis, but is influenced by the factors of esteem and prestige.

Three observations should be made here. In the first place Adam Smith was concerned with exchange value alone ("the power of purchasing other goods") and thus his conception of value is definitely objective. Secondly, Smith applied the labor theory of value only to the simplest societies. For more advanced societies it was necessary to include in the market price of the commodity, the cost of land, the cost of capital, as well as labor costs. Thirdly, there is apparent

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3. Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations (Cannan's ed.), p. 30.

in The Wealth of Nations a marked sympathy for the laboring class.

Thomas R. Malthus (1766-1834) was the first to cast doubts on the easy optimism of Smith's economic views. He accepted the position of the Physiocrats that land produced more than enough to maintain those who tilled it. He augmented this view with three propositions of his own. First, population tends to increase faster than the food supply, resulting in an ever increasing demand for agricultural products. Second, land differs in fertility, and the labor and capital applied to different areas yields different results. Thirdly, the difference in productivity of the best land over the poorer provides a surplus which the owner appropriates in the form of rent.

Malthus related his theory of wages to his theory of population, depending upon a supply and demand system. He recommended that marriage be restrained, at least until people were thirty years of age, and this would reduce the number of children they would have and thus the number of wage-earners and consequently raise the standard of wages. Malthus believed that the subsistence level (governed by custom) sets the level of wages and that the subsistence level may not fall below that determined by custom, if ample labor supply is to be on hand, with what that means for the rate of wages.

For more than a quarter of a century Adam Smith's analysis

of value was not seriously challenged. Then came David Ricardo (1772-1823), the son of a London stockbroker who, having made a fortune early in life, retired to study and write in the field of economics. He served also as a Member of Parliament. The basic teaching of his early period was that, on the hypothesis of free competition, exchange value is determined by the labor expended in production. Ricardo was not interested in short-term market value, but treated only long-term or normal value. Here he recognized that scarcity and the quantity of labor required to produce articles influenced their value. Capital was viewed as stored-up labor and rent was paid on land only in terms of its superiority over the poorest land under cultivation. This was also the position of physiocracy.

In 1817 Ricardo published his book, Principles of Political Economy and Taxation. It would appear that by this time he was prepared to deviate somewhat from the pure labor theory of value, but he was unable to set forth an answer to his own labor theory of value. Although his writings are criticized for their lack of preciseness and vagueness, Ricardo has had a tremendous influence upon the development of the classical tradition in economics. He was not a social philosopher like Adam Smith but a retired stockbroker and he regarded the laborers merely as instruments in the hands of capitalists. With Ricardo we have arrived at a well worked out statement of the theory of capitalism. It is important to remember that the

new capitalist economic policy was put forward in opposition, not to socialism, but to mercantilism, and that, while the mercantilists were told that they could not rightly use government to further their own private ends, the laborers, similarly were told that they could not modify the operation of the system because it was governed by immutable laws and principles. Thus the freedom which the Renaissance and the Reformation conferred upon the individual and which functioned to undermine the old social, political ecclesiastical order was being slowly counteracted by commercialism. Indeed the latter was no more favorable to individual freedom than the feudalism it had largely displaced. While it removed restrictions from men's rights on one hand, it inflicted on the other hand new restrictions. These restrictions were on the whole politico-economic and it was in the field of economic activity that they were a real burden. The explanation is that with the passing of feudalism, government in the state was centralized, and colonial and trade expansion made economic interest the dominant element in the policies of rival states. Thomas Mun (1571-1641), greatest English advocate of mercantilism, had taken the position that the great object of government economics should be to maintain the balance of trade, that is, the excess of exports over imports; trade restrictions and tariffs should be formulated with this end in view. The method of maintaining a balance of exports over imports would give a

state a title to gold and silver payment; in other words, strength in monetary wealth. The theory and practice of mercantilism prevailed for two hundred years, and everywhere there were fast bound restrictions on industry. Agricultural producers were terribly pressed. This at length caused a reaction that later led, in a new movement, to the opposite extreme. The attack against mercantilism was led by the French physiocrats and Adam Smith, the latter having been indebted to mercantilist thought. Smith and the French physiocrats were dependent upon the ideas of Rousseau, who idealized man in the natural state, drawing a distinction between the natural order and the positive. The physiocrats built their doctrine on the order of nature, the ideal order whose laws were recognized as the will of God and whose arrangements were perfect. Thus the positive order was viewed as being ruled by human law and as having imperfect arrangements.

Now this doctrine of the physiocrats and of Adam Smith led to an emphasis upon the natural and inalienable rights of the individual in society and upon the necessity of his having freedom to exercise those rights up to the limit where such exercise begins to infringe upon the rights of others. Since government was established by consent, it should impose only those restraints necessary to the safeguarding of the rights and privileges of all. In the economic sphere this doctrine of natural right received special application. In this

connection it meant the freedom of the individual to profit by his own labor and it was held that the unhindered use of this freedom, particularly in the pursuit of trade and exchange, would insure wealth and would promote the general welfare. There is a natural harmony of personal and social good. This is the famous doctrine of laissez faire which was developed in the sphere of economics against the restraints of mercantilism.

As has been pointed out above Smith led the attack against mercantilism. Influenced by the physiocrats, he taught with them that the individual should be left to the guidance of his own interests in economic pursuits. It seems that credit for the creation of the economic man is given to Smith. And yet, as was also indicated above, there was a definite moral concern expressed in his teaching. In The Theory of Moral Sentiments, Smith places the accent not on self-interest but on sympathy. But the followers of Adam Smith accepted the psychological theories of The Wealth of Nations and ignored the moral teachings of the earlier book.

Rousseau, the great exponent of individualism in the eighteenth century, had, with his stress upon the principle of human rights and worth, given a very different slant to individualism from the self-seeking individualism developed in the sphere of economics. There was ground in Rousseau's thought for the emergence of an individualism which was socially sensitive. Not even the utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham (1748-

1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) was altogether unmindful of the principle of equality. Still utilitarianism, with its formula of "the greatest good for the greatest number" did much to serve as justification for the institution of private property and the practice of unrestrained individualism. Referring to the evolution of individualism, John Line wrote,

> As individualism proceeded on its course in the nineteenth century it dropped its gospel of equality.... Of the eighteenth century trilogy of liberty, equality and fraternity, only the first had the vitality to survive the industrial revolution or was compatible with the temper it engendered. It is this fact more than any other that introduces us to the darker side in the story of laissez faire.[4]

This tendency to forget the second name in the trilogy (justice) culminated in the so-called economic man and the glorification of selfish individualism. Thus severe inequalities among economic groups developed, through an application of the right to free enterprise in the acquisition of wealth. In time liberty became primarily the right of the owners of capital; liberty became a class liberty. McConnell points out that a return to the emphasis present in Smith's philosophy as set forth in The Theory of Moral Sentiments awaited the arrival of an American economist, Thorstein Veblein, in the late nineteenth century.[5]

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[4] R. B. Y. Scott & Gregory Vlastos, eds., Towards the Christian Revolution, p. 9.

[5] John W. McConnell, Basic Teachings of the Great Economists, p. 70.

While the neo-classicists branched off from the original classical root in one direction in the development of their ideas of wages (accepting the marginal productivity theory: the wages paid labor are determined by its marginal utility to the employer), the school of socialists branched off in another direction in its development of the labor theory of value. In England, where capitalism was most advanced, there was a number of prominent socialists, William Godwin, Charles Hall, William Thompson, John Gray, Thomas Hodgskin, and John Francis Bray. Karl Marx became well acquainted with the socialist writings and he was profoundly influenced by them. The early socialists, Thompson (1783-1833), Bray (1809-1895), and Gray (1799-1850), accepted the original position of Ricardo that labor was responsible for all value. Referring to these socialists McConnell wrote:

> Thompson believed that machinery was stored-up labor in the first instance, and that management was a form of labor; hence both had the right to a return. Bray said that labor created all value, and in exchange equal value should be exchanged for equal value; any deviation from this practice was unjust. Gray said, "It is labor alone which bestows value." The work of these men is not so much economic analysis of values as an ethical assumption.[6]

The view conveyed in the quotation is the nineteenth century equivalent of the medieval notion of the "Just price". Thompson uses the words "surplus value", although with different

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[6] McConnell, op. cit., p. 32.

content from Karl Marx. Godwin's principal work, An Inquiry Concerning Political Justice, appeared in 1793 with a critical attack upon capitalism. Here are to be found the rudiments of much of Marxist socialism as also of philosophical anarchism.

Let us now turn back to France. Attention had already been directed to the writings of Rousseau, which expressed opposition to the rule of the monarchy and set forth the sentiments of the "Social Contract". By its attitude toward solicitations for social reforms, the monarchy did not gain stature in the eyes of the peasants. The example of the American Revolution fired French zeal for revolution. This zeal was nourished by the emerging commercial and industrial interests, anxious to seize power from the ruling aristocracy in behalf of their business enterprises.

Using liberty, equality and fraternity as a watchword, the peasants and city workers allied themselves with the commercial and industrial groups to bring in the revolution. Power transferred from the hands of the ruling aristocracy into the hands of the new class, the bourgeoisie. Disillusionment followed in the train of the revolution, for men were made legally equal, but not socially equal. The relation of property had remained static, and thus the fundamental cause of the workers' unfortunate state remained unchanged. If any change took place its effect was negative, growing out of the increased

use of machine production. Reaction to this condition ranged from extreme pessimism to a more constructive attitude in the form of a quest for the answer. The socialist utopians are to be classified in the latter category.

The antecedents of socialism can be traced to two great revolutions, and to the thought of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Adam Smith, with varying stress on such ideas as freedom, equality, justice, and the value of labor. The utopians, the outline of whose thought will follow, differ from the earlier socialists, Sir Thomas More, Mabley, Morelly, Godwin, and Babeuf (whose conspiracy took place in 1796 and is not to be regarded as essentially different from the crude efforts in communism made in earlier times) in that they proceeded upon no merely moral basis. Saint-Simon, Robert Owen and Fourier held an economic point of view and their criticism sprang out of the great distress of the Industrial and French Revolutions. Owen worked chiefly under the influence of the former and Saint-Simon and Fourier grew up under the latter. These men were anti-capitalistic, and advocated broad economic reforms. As either socialists or communists, they criticised the prevailing view of property and competition. The conduct of the uneducated and headstrong proletariat in the course of the French Revolution gave evidence that they were unequal to the problems of post-revolutionary adjustment; nor did they possess sufficient financial resources. Saint-Simon, Owen, and Fourier appealed,

therefore, to the upper class for aid for the poor and counted heavily upon education as their chief instrument for social reform. They were not revolutionists, for their plans for social reform were largely speculative and derived from ideal postulates. Humanitarian in outlook, they made no effort to organize the workers in class conflict. They counted on securing leadership for reform efforts from the dominant group. Let us turn now for a brief review of the schemes of these men.

Comte Henri De Saint-Simon (1760-1825)

Saint-Simon was a socialist theorist and revolutionary of a sort. The ideal of Saint-Simon seems to have been an industrial state in which universal association should suppress war, and society should be organized for productive labor by the most capable men. He wanted to see the new industry so organized that all would share its benefits. This does not mean that all would share equally the fruits of industry, but equitably; for Saint-Simon and his followers recognized that there is an actual inequality among the producers, some being intelligent, energetic, and skillful, and others being stupid, slow, and lazy. The insistence is that each shall labor according to his capacity and receive a reward according to services rendered.

Production, under Saint-Simon's plan, would be organized in somewhat the same way as the army is administered, with a

graduation of authority and of ranks. The directing authorities would decide the value of the service of each to society and the reward which each should receive. Strangely enough, Saint-Simon left no clear plan by means of which the leaders should be selected to direct production and to see that the product was equitably distributed. This is the critical point in the set-up: how should the leaders be chosen? By popular vote? By appointment? In the case of the former, there would be no guarantee of a choice of the most competent leaders. and in the case of the latter, the question becomes who will have the power of appointment? These questions seem not to have disturbed our socialist. His assumption seemed to have been that the capable and the good would naturally gravitate to the place of leadership, voluntarily assume the positions for which their respective capacities fitted them, and that there would be no opposition to such an arrangement. Significantly, Saint-Simon did not emphasize the class struggle.

As a prerequisite for the establishment of his system, Saint Simon demanded the destruction of the remains of privilege, and especially of inheritance, by the operation of which not only wealth but misery become hereditary. Therefore, land, capital, and the instruments of labor should become public property. The theory of collectivism was not clearly worked out in Saint-Simon's system; he still seems to have left a place for private property, provided there was competent industrial direction. It is important to point out here that

this scheme for the emancipation of the worker includes the emancipation of women also. The status of woman is a particular concern of Saint-Simon's thought.

In the New Christianity, published in 1825, Saint-Simon contends that the duty of aiding one another in a spirit of mutual love becomes the central doctrine of a "new religion". Beginning with a belief in God, he endeavors to resolve Christianity into its essential elements and finally expounds the doctrine: "The whole of society ought to strive towards the amelioration of the moral and physical existence of the poorest class; society ought to organize itself in the way best adapted for attaining this end." The social question thus becomes the essence of religion.

After Saint-Simon's death, a school of Saint-Simonism developed. Many of the master's ideas were clarified, refined, and modified.

As a summary let me quote a passage from a description which Laidler gives of Saint-Simon and his followers:

> Their aim was, then, a cooperative commonwealth, ruled bureaucratically by an aristocracy of science. Their proposals for public ownership and their insistence on reward according to merit distinctly anticipated modern socialistic principles. On the other hand, their dependence on the classes rather than the masses to bring about the change and their plans for the bureaucratic administration of industry without proper democratic safeguards were greatly at variance with the ideals of the modern movement.[7]

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7. Laidler, A History of Socialist Thought, p. 66.

Saint-Simon began to make public his views in 1817, in a series of books and pamphlets. This is the same year in which Owen presented his scheme for a socialistic community to the committee of the House of Commons on the Poor Law, and some writers consider this year to have marked the beginning of socialism.[8] Saint-Simon's central concern was to direct the labor of the nation so as to ameliorate the unfortunate condition of all its members. He thought a broad industrialism under the control of industrial chiefs would serve this end, and thus release France from an idle and privileged feudalism which had survived the Revolution.

Robert Owen (1771-1858)

Robert Owen was manufacturer, utopian, cooperator, and "father of British Socialism". He was a man who rose out of poverty to a considerable wealth. He was a sensitive spirit and at the New Lanark mills he became increasingly conscious of the fact that his fortune as well as that of others had been amassed from the exploitation of children, and the poor, among whom he had only recently been numbered. He desired to do something, and so zealously sponsored ameliorative measures to make the face of the factory system more attractive. He moved through several phases in his thinking. Convinced that ameliorative measures in individual factories were not enough

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[8] See, for example, Thomas Kirkup's A History of Socialism, p. 20.

to stem the tide of poverty and unemployment, he advocated Parliamentary legislation, appealing to both manufacturers and workmen to cooperate in a spirit free of hatred and violence. The stubbornness of the manufacturers convinced Owen that more drastic measures needed to be taken, so he moved toward communism (socialism, as he later preferred to call it), still accepting, however, private property. The next step came soon when he embraced communism completely and condemned private property. Failing to convince other manufacturers of his communist views and also lacking the full support of his own associates at the New Lanark mills, Owen launched forth to establish utopia at New Harmony in America. He failed. Returning to England, he employed the last thirty years of his life as a propagandist for socialism and secularism. One of the noteworthy achievements of the movement in this period was the establishment in 1832 of an equitable labor exchange system, in which exchange was effected by means of labor notes, thus eliminating the customary means of exchange and the usual middleman. The word "socialism" was popularized in the discussion of the Association of All Classes of All Nations, which Owen formed in 1835. During this period Owen's influence among the working men was strong, due in great part to their interest in his secularistic teachings.

The utopian character of Owen's thinking is illustrated by his proposals for the solution of the unemployment problem

in 1817, which arose from overproduction. The need for action became so great that the House of Commons was finally forced to appoint a Committee on Poor Laws. Owen presented a report to this committee on the causes of poverty and the means of avoiding it, and the following year he presented another report to the Allied Powers assembled in a congress at Aix-la-Chapelle. It appears that at this juncture Owen had moved away from his earlier position of mere amelioration. He is now convinced that no temporary measures could check poverty, the deplorable but inevitable concomitant of modern industrial development. The years of experience at the New Lanark mills had demonstrated to his mind that private property was incompatible with social well-being. The years had taught him that to make it possible for all people to live equally happy and moral lives, they must have equal material resources and conditions of life, and he was puzzled that others before him had not recognized this truth. Thus Owen's solution of the problem of poverty was Communism or Socialism. Hillquit describes the solution as follows:

> As a solution of the problem, Owen proposed the establishment of industrial communities on the basis of mutual cooperation. The communities were to consist of 500 to 1,000 persons, who would themselves produce all the necessaries of life. The members were to be housed in attractive buildings surrounded by gardens. Industry was to be conducted on a large scale by the men, while the women were to do the housework and tend to the education of the children.

The plan was rejected by the committee as too

> radical but, nothing daunted, Owen continued his propaganda at public meetings and by private agitation.[9]

Owen's unemployment reform remained on paper, and became known jocularly as "Owen's Parallelograms."

Owen's view was less idealistic and his methods more practical than those of Saint-Simon and Fourier. His philosophy was similar to theirs. His sense of history clearly inadequate. Accepting the proposition that men are naturally good, Owen argued that private property, religion, and the institution of marriage are three barriers to the full expression of this naturally-good human nature. He rejected the idea that competition is in the best interest of society, and took the position that the just price of a product is its cost. The unjust price (charging more than cost) seemed to him to lead to overproduction and crises. Owen discredited the political reforms of 1832, and considered chartism, politically, to be impotent.

The concrete achievements of Robert Owen during his lifetime did not make an impressive list. His most important practical experiment in improving labor conditions was that undertaken at the New Lanark mills, an experiment that attracted world-wide attention. Recall here that he introduced the first infant-school system. He introduced the merit system,

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[9] Morris Hillquit, Socialism in the United States, p. 53.

promoting men in the mills on the basis of their work record and private conduct. He was first to advocate cooperative associations. And he certainly anticipated many of the theories and features of the modern socialist movement. Referring to his positive contribution Laidler writes:

> And yet, despite his errors in judgment and the failure of many of his plans, the great hearted and lovable cotton manufacturer and communist did exert a profound influence on the social thinking of the world. His indictment of the present order of society for its waste, its injustices, its tragedy of unemployment; his emphasis on social happiness as the ideal of human progress; his insistence that character was profoundly influenced by social environment, his urgent plea that all cooperate for the common welfare in the production and distribution of wealth, left their imprint on future generations.[10]

No one who worked for social regeneration with the devotion and sacrifice of Robert Owen could fail to influence the future.

The Successors of Owen: The Chartists and Christian Socialists

It is necessary to include a word here about the successors to Owen in England. Carlyle's book, Past and Present, did much to heighten discontent among the workers with the present conditions. In 1832 a resuscitation of the working class movement was evident and it was generally related to parliamentary politics. As in the case of the July (1830) revolution in France, when the workers had been disappointed,

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[10] Harry W. Laidler, A History of Socialist Thought, pp. 121-22.

so also in England the reform of 1832 elevated the middle class to power, but ignored the claims of the workingmen. The latter expressed their disappointment and discontent through the Chartist movement. While Chartism was strongly motivated by economic concerns, it was more powerfully driven by the desire for political reform. The failure to effect constitutional reforms led certain radical reformers to join hands with the Chartists in 1838 in an effort to secure six small reforms. Propaganda for the Charter spread from London, as center, to the provinces. In the first years of the movement a number of middle class liberals associated themselves with the movement. Thomas Attwood assumed the leadership of the fight to get the reforms through Parliament by constitutional changes. Parliament delayed. The radical wing of workers recommended that a general strike be called as a protest and carried their point in the voting, whereupon the middle class liberals withdrew from the movement. Finally, Parliament denied Attwood's petition. The general strike was called but was unsuccessful primarily because of poor organization. It is interesting to point out here that the Chartists through their publications gave currency to the theory of "surplus value," which was later elaborated by Karl Marx.

The Christian socialist movement in England covered the years from 1848 to 1852, following the failure of Owenism and Chartism. The leaders were Maurice, Kingsley, and Ludlow.

1848 was the year when Marx and Engels published the Communist Manifesto, and when the peak of the French revolution and the Chartist movement was reached. In February, 1848, the French revolution struck in Paris. John M. Ludlow, who was educated in France and knew the theories of Fourier, was a friend of Maurice. Ludlow returned to England, convinced that socialism was a strong movement and he shared Maurice' thought that it ought to be Christianized. On April 10, 1848, a great mass meeting, under Chartist leadership, was staged in London. Kingsley hurried down to London from Eversley eager to observe the happenings at close range. Kingsley and Ludlow met at Maurice's home and together they walked to Kennington Common where they observed the failure of the Chartist demonstration, and were aroused with deep sympathy for the cause of the working class. That night Kingsley wrote all night, drawing up what was a manifesto for the workers. In it he assured the working class that they had many friends, and insisted that the Charter was not sufficient for their freedom; they needed education also, and they needed the Christian approach. The next morning, thousands of posters carried Kingsley's message and appeal. When he returned home, three days later, the Christian socialist movement had been formed, dedicated to socialism in Christianity and Christianity in socialism--a point of view emphasized by Maurice. The latter believed that socialism belonged in the realm of the Church rather than in

the realm of the State.

Publications formed a great part of the work of the Christian socialist movement. On May 6, 1848, the first number of the weekly, Politics for the People, was issued, having as its purpose "the establishment of the union between social life and Christianity." After seventeen weeks the paper was discontinued because the funds were exhausted. In the year 1850, Maurice and Kingsley published Tracts on Christian Socialism, dedicated to setting forth the principles of Christian Socialism. This publication also was short-lived, and was mostly academic and conservative. In November, 1850, Ludlow began publishing his weekly, Christian Socialist, in which he elaborated the principles of the movement, stressing the economic note. He wrote vigorously against competition for profit, false cheapness and starvation, and on behalf of fair prices, living wages, and "Association and Exchange." By the end of 1851 this weekly had run out. From 1852-1854 Maurice, Kingsley and Hughes issued The Journal of Association, which has as its aim the spread of information about the principles of cooperatives. This was a move in the direction of practical activity, but the workers did not have the franchise, so this effort was not so significant. Between 1850 and 1851 some dozen cooperative workshops were founded—a bit of mediaevalism in the midst of growing capitalism—but they were unsuccessful, due to lack of funds and poor discipline.

On the positive side it may be indicated that the Christian socialists movement contributed to the drafting of an act which it helped to push through Parliament, favoring the Association for Promoting Industrial and Provident Societies. This meant the legalizing of the trade union movement. A contribution was made to the education of the workingman of London by founding the Working Men's College, where some very prominent men have taught. The Christian socialist movement also gave its support to sanitary reform. By 1854 Christian Socialism, as a movement, had run its course. It had been a movement based on the conviction that reformation should be effected within man as well as in his environment. It was a serious endeavor to supply a social philosophy for both individual and social needs. Finally, it aimed to provide an adequate motivation for social action. The death of the movement as such did not mean the loss of the ideal which was the genius of the movement. The secular socialists who later came into prominence rest their case much more heavily upon reformation of the economic and political system.

It is necessary now to pick up again the thread of socialist thought as it unravels in France. It has been stated above that while Robert Owen worked chiefly under the influence of the Industrial Revolution, Saint-Simon and Fourier were strongly influenced by the French Revolution. Let us now turn to Fourier's socialist ideas.

Charles Fourier (1772-1837)

Fourier wrote with clearness; he was more logical and consistent than Saint-Simon. Hillquit describes the social system of Fourier as "the most ingenious and elaborate scheme presented by any utopian writer." Fourier showed no interest in attracting disciples or forming a party, but desired to convince a few men of property, who would be ready to put his theories into operation. Once they were tried, he was convinced that their success would lead to general imitation; and thus the new order would be realized. Fourier's system was hardly noticed, however, until the movements founded by Owen and Saint-Simon began to lose their popularity.

Fourier and Saint-Simon represent strikingly different schools of socialism—centralized and decentralized socialism. Saint-Simon was an exponent of centralization in socialism, taking the State as his starting point and the authority, even though he did not propose State Socialism. On the contrary Fourier advocated decentralization, making provision for maximum local and individual freedom. In his system, authority centered in the commune or Phalanx. Both Owen and Fourier may be characterized by their advocacy of associations with a limited membership, because of which they are designated "Associationists". The associations based upon the mutual consent of their members, were to be voluntary organizations.

Fourier's utopian scheme is worked out in detail in his

first work, *The Theory of the Four Movements and of the General Destinies*. The scheme has for a foundation a particular psychological proposition and a special economic doctrine. Psychologically, Fourier held the view that the full free development of human nature or the unrestrained indulgence of human passion is the only possible way to happiness. He proceeds to analyze the human passions, and find them to be twelve in number. Below, the table of passions is listed as reproduced by Hillquit.[11]

Five sensitive passions	(Sight (Hearing (Smell (Taste (Touch
Four effective passions	(Friendship (Love (Ambition (Paternity
Three distributive, or directive passions	(Emulative (Alternating (Composite

When the first five passions are properly exercised, they tend to elegance, refinement, the cultivation of all the fine arts, and to physical health and enjoyment. The four effective passions are designated Social Passions because they tend to establish well balanced and harmonious social relations between man and man. Since the three distributive passions are peculiar to Fourier's thought I must quote again from Hillquit:

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[11] Hillquit, *History of Socialism in the United States*, p. 72.

> The tenth, or Emulative Spirit, called by Fourier the Cabaliste, is the spirit of party, intrigue, or rivalry. Exercised in a legitimate manner, as in the rivalry of groups for the excellence of their productions, it is a source of great industrial improvements and inventions. The eleventh, or Alternating Passion, called the Papillione in the technical language of Fourierism, is the desire for change and variety in all pursuits. Applied to industry, it would destroy the monotony of the present methods of work, and make the latter pleasant and attractive. The twelfth, or Composite Passion, is the spirit of enthusiasm begotten by a combination of two passions of different groups, as, for instance, hearing excellent music in the company of dear friends, which gratifies both the sense of hearing and sense of friendship. Applied to industry, it signifies the association of congenial persons for the performance of pleasant and attractive work.[12]

A free play of these passions leads to the formation of Groups and Series. A Group is an assemblage based upon identity of taste for the exercise of some branch of Industry, Science or Art. A number of Groups unite into a Series. To provide a field broad enough to allow everyone to exercise usefully his varied inclinations by means of Groups and Series, a large number of persons, preferably 1,800 to 2,000 must associate together. This association, called the Phalanx, is the social unit in the system of Fourier.

Each Phalanx would occupy a square league of land, and be not only self-supporting, but self-sufficient. It would have its own factory, farms, and stores. The phalstery, or common dwelling, would have every convenience and beauty. The utmost

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12. Hillquit, op. cit., p. 73.

freedom of life would prevail, and restraint would be reduced to a minimum.

Individuals might join any Series or Group as desired, and change from Group to Group at will. They would naturally choose those units whose work and tastes were congenial. When one task became monotonous, workers would then be at liberty to change their occupation to a more pleasing one. Owing to the joy that the members of the Phalanx would get out of their work under these circumstances, and to the healthy rivalry for quick and efficient results which would naturally develop between the groups, the product of these workers would be far greater than at present. Besides increasing production, the Phalanx was expected to avoid the waste caused by industrial and commercial competition. Fourier held that productivity would increase fourfold or possibly fivefold and that a man would produce enough between his eighteenth and twenty-eighth birthday to live in leisure and comfort during the remainder of his life.

The Phalanx is not a communistic organization. Seven-eighths of the members are farmers and mechanics, others being capitalists, men of science and artists. Another threefold classification of labor, according to Fourier, is necessary labor, useful labor, useful and agreeable labor. From the product of industry, a sum is set aside for each member of the community. The surplus remaining is divided between

labor, capital, and talent. Five-twelfths of this surplus goes to labor, four-twelfths to capital, and the remaining three-twelfths to talent. The designation of four-twelfths to capital suggests that Fourier was not a thorough-going socialist. He argued that no jealousy or antagonism would be created by this division of profits, as there would be no fixed class in the Phalanx. The same member holds one or more shares in the Phalanx, does work in one or more groups, and develops special skills in one or more branches of industry, and thus shares in all three classes of profit. So Fourier modifies the motto of Saint-Simon into the formula: from each according to his capacity *and to each according to his labor, capital, and talent*.

In brief this is the sketch of Fourier's system. The author expected his system gradually to supersede the existing order of things. The first Phalanx being established, others would follow in rapid succession until the entire globe would be covered with them, and Fourier calculated that the globe would hold exactly two million of Phalanxes.

On the whole, Fourier's contribution to the cause of socialism was mainly through the indirect influence of certain of his teachings. He did valuable service in calling attention to the waste in the modern economic system, the unnecessary hardships of labor, and the need for making work pleasanter than it was in the France of his day. The following is a

partial summary of the merits of Fourier's work cited by Haney:

> There is a good deal of truth in some of his critical remarks. The importance of cooperative production has been recognized chiefly in consequence of his first pointing out the economic benefits of association. The narrow-minded fear of wholesale trade, and machinery, too, was in a measure dispelled by Fourier's unqualified recognition of their value.[13]

Although Fourier has profound faith in the ultimate realization of his utopian scheme and let nothing discourage him, he was never able to secure funds with which to build a model Phalanx. In his latest writings he was making appeals for such money. It is reported that for ten years before his death Fourier went home methodically at noon, expecting the answer to his appeal in the presence of a wealthy donor. He died with a small group of faithful disciples around him, without ever having seen Utopia.

After his death, Fourier's theories were actually tried out in several places. His disciples finally founded the Society for the Propagation and Realization of the Theory of Fourier. Experiments were conducted in France and America, without success.

In France, after Saint-Simon and Fourier, the socialist movement is represented by Proudhon and Louis Blanc. Another interesting utopian socialist, however, stands between Fourier and Proudhon, and brief mention should be made of him.

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13. Quoted by Lewis H. Haney, History of Economic Thought, p. 391.

Étienne Cabet (1788-1858)

Cabet was born in Dijon, France, in 1788. He received an excellent education, studied medicine and law, and had considerable success in the practice of law in his home town. At an early age he took up residence in Paris and affiliated himself with secret revolutionary societies which were numerous in the capital at this time.

In the revolution of 1830 Cabet took a leading part as a member of the "Insurrection Committee," and upon the enthronement of Louis Philippe, he was appointed attorney general for Corsica. This appointment did not wean him from the revolutionary societies. He was removed from office promptly and in 1834 the citizens of Dijon elected him as their deputy in the lower chamber. His persistent opposition to the government and his revolutionary attitude in the chamber caused him to be brought to trial and to be awarded the sentence of five years in exile.

Cabet went to England to spend the five years. Much time was devoted to study and meditation and as a result he produced a system of associative socialism very similar to that of Robert Owen. Returning to France in 1839, Cabet published his views in a work entitled Voyage to Icaria. The publication of that book marked a turning point in his whole career.

Voyage to Icaria was written in the form of a novel. According to the story, Icar, the national hero of Icaria, after

a successful revolution, established a communist order. Here Cabet has the opportunity to depict graphically the evils of the existing social structure and also to set forth an outline of his favorite measures for the new order. The important measures are the progressive income tax, abolition of wages, national workshops, agricultural colonies, and, above all, a thorough and liberal system of education. The core of Cabet's thought seems to be that the abolition of private property will purge men of selfishness and greed.

Like Owen, Cabet sought to realize his ideas in practice in America—with hardly moderate success.

It has been suggested above that the advent of socialism as a stage in the development of society, and as a theory of society was dependent upon the existence of certain objective conditions and intellectual achievements. We found the roots of socialism in the Industrial Revolution and in ideas proclaimed by the French Revolution, especially two ideas, Reason and Freedom. In the economic realm these two ideas were traced to the thought of the school of Adam Smith. We have passed in rapid review the schemes of the great utopian socialists, Robert Owen, Saint-Simon, Cabet and Fourier. In treating the rise of socialism, we have been providing the background for Karl Marx. Marxism presupposes the existence of a type of socialism which formed Marx's background.

One cannot read about the work of the utopian socialists

without catching something of their spirit and without being stirred, to some degree, by their longing. They were filled with a divine discontent with the status quo of their day. They had the courage to turn the spotlight on the evils of the industrial system and to call for reform. Again, they demonstrated the spirit of adventure in proposing new and radical changes in the social and political system. The intention of the utopian socialists seems to be ethically orientated.

It can be said, I think, that the common weakness of the systems we have examined is that they were based on abstractions. In the case of a scheme like Fourier's, the indication is that the author simply assumed or believed some "eternal truth" or "principle" and from this derived, by logical deduction, his whole utopian plan. The details of the plan could be demonstrated like Euclidean propositions. This method of ethical deduction is not acceptable. Engel's word about socialism is offered here:

> ... To all these, socialism is the expression of absolute truth, reason and justice, and has only to be discovered to conquer all the world by virtue of its own power. And as absolute truth is independent of time, space, and of the historical development of man, it is a mere accident when and where it is discovered. With all this, absolute truth, reason and justice are different with the founder of each different school. And as each one's special kind of absolute truth, reason and justice is again conditioned by his subjective understanding, his conditions of existence, the measure of his knowledge and his intellectual training, there is no other ending possible in this conflict of absolute truths than that they shall be mutually exclusive one of the other. Hence,

> from this nothing could come but a kind of eclectic, average socialism, which, as a matter of fact, has up to the present time dominated the minds of most of the socialist workers in France and England. Hence, a mishmash of such critical statements, economic theories, pictures of future society by the founders of different sects, as excite a minimum of opposition; a mishmash which is the more easily brewed the more definite sharp edges of the individual constituents are rubbed down in the stream of debate, like rounded pebbles in a brook.
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> To make a science of socialism, it had first to be placed upon a real basis.[14]

In a sense one is deeply impressed by the efforts on the part of the utopians to establish communities in which to test their ideas and theories. These experiments in almost every instance were a failure, indicative of the fact that the ideal community cannot be founded apart from the main stream of life—in isolation from the surrounding world and its corrupting influences. The ideal community that endures must be founded in the presence of the unseemly. This is an ethical demand.

The basic presupposition of the utopian socialist seems to be in the form of the old social contract theory popularized by Rousseau. In this view the institution of private property was brought about by a contract made in the distant past after the disappearance of the natural state and its communistic system of property. This contract may be altered at any time, however, by the individual members of society. Since this is so, then the contract should be altered in such

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[14] Frederick Engels, Socialism, Utopian and Scientific, pp. 1718; see also pp. 6-7, 20-25.

a way that men, who are by nature good, shall be released from evil institutions and be allowed to develop according to the laws of nature. The problem was, then, to discover the form of social organization that would give nature's forces full play. While the utopias differ they are, nevertheless, an attempt in each instance to find the proper form of social organization in order that man's impulses which are naturally good may have complete expression and thereby bring happiness.

Generally speaking, the utopian socialists were much too unconcerned about how their ideal schemes were to be realized. The ethical requirement is not only to possess an ideal but to have in hand means appropriate for the realization of the ideal. Of course, the major presupposition renders the ineffectiveness of the utopians at this point understandable.

The utopians had no conception of social evolution. It is true that Fourier divided the history of society into five great epochs, namely, savagery, barbarism, the patriarchate, civilization, and finally his own, but the theory seems to have had no functional significance.

Finally, the utopians were not real revolutionaries. They thought of the socialist order primarily as largesse from the classes to the masses.

In France, after Saint-Simon, Cabet, and Fourier, the socialist movement was represented by Proudhon and Louis Blanc. The theories of Saint-Simon and Fourier had met with acceptance

mainly among the educated classes. In so far as class conflict was concerned, the insurrections and revolutions through the year 1830 were led by the capitalists and middle-class and were in their interest rather than in the interest of wage-earners or laborers. Early in the '30s, however, a change was effected in the direction of proletarian socialism. While the French Revolution of July 1830 was for the benefit of the bourgeoisie, the working men were more actively engaged. Then came the insurrection of the Lyons silk weavers in 1831. In this period the Chartist movement was at work in England. The climactic event in this time of transition was the revolution which occurred in France in 1848. Proletarian and more realistic socialism began to assert itself. We may turn, now, to Louis Blanc, whose outstanding demand was for the democratic organization of the State as preparatory to social reorganization.

Louis Blanc (1813-1882)

Blanc was born in Madrid, Spain, where his father has been sent by Louis Bonaparte as Inspector General of Finance. He spent his early years in Corsica, the home of his mother, studied in the College of Rodez, and continued his studies in Paris, earning part of his expenses by copying and teaching. After some years of editorial experience, he founded, at the age of twenty-six, the *Revue du Progres*, which became the organ of the advanced democrats of his day. His most important

socialistic work, Organization du Travail, appeared serially in this paper in 1840. His writings include outstanding histories of the years 1830 to 1840, and of the French Revolution.

In 1848 Blanc became a prominent member of the Provisional Government. In this capacity, he demanded that the government guarantee work to everyone unable to obtain it elsewhere, and that it create a Ministry of Labor and Progress. Accused of connections with an insurrectionary movement, Blanc was expelled from the country and lived in England as a correspondent until the overthrow of Napoleon III in 1870. He returned to France and was elected to the National Assembly as a member of the extreme left, but soon lost favor with his party by opposing the insurrection. Upon his death in 1882 he was given a state funeral by the Chamber of Deputies.

Blanc established an enviable reputation as a writer and as a generous and lovable personality. Writing of his particular insight, Vedder says:

> Louis Blanc was the first to advocate revolutionary socialism, though it was revolution without violence. Saint-Simon divorced economics from politics, and Fourier followed this example; they appealed to ideas, not to political parties. Blanc saw that if Saint-Simon's notion of governmental direction of production was ever to be realized, there must first of all be a change of political institutions.... A government representative of the people, and so in harmony with the people, must be secured first of all.[15]

Blanc qualifies as a utopian because he felt that the

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[15] Henry C. Vedder, Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus, p. 64.

impossible of his generation could in that generation become a reality. He appealed directly to labor to effect the necessary transformation.

In his Organization of Labor, Blanc delivers a stinging criticism of the evils of competition. He contended that soul and body must be developed together; moral and material progress are mutually interdependent. A society which does not guarantee to each one of its members what he needs is a failure. Individualism, characteristic of the existing system, according to Blanc, gave the individual an exalted sentiment of his own rights without indicating to him his duties. The individual is left to his own will while government is ruled by the policy of laissez faire. The result is want and misery, which prevent rounded development. Therefore a new organization of society is necessary, but this requires political reform. In order to achieve successful Socialism, the State must be reorganized on a truly democratic basis as a first step.

The principal step in reaching the ideal society is to devise some plan whereby everyone shall be guaranteed work. This can be attained through the erection of social workshops by the state, for the first year assigning each laborer to his place, according to his ability. During this year the workers will become acquainted with each other, and thereafter be prepared to elect their own chiefs. Since the workers are poor, the state should lend the workshops credit without interest, pass

laws regulating their conduct and guarantee through supervision that they operate in the public interest. Money for this venture should be secured by the state from general taxation and from revenue derived from railways, mines, and other public enterprises. Slowly private industry would be absorbed, but none would be forced to join the movement. Finally, the social workshop, having capital without interest, attracting the best workmen, possessing the advantages of vast organization, would soon make competition by private capital impossible. Thus the socialistic state will be formed, according to Blanc, and the best interests of all the people, rich as well as poor, will be conserved.

Blanc recognizes that great differences exist in the powers and abilities of men. In the development of social industry the ideal to be attained is the placement of each individual in such a position that he may be able fully to use his capacities. In addition, "The more a man can, the more he ought." But Blanc argues that not what one gives to society, but what one needs, is the true principle to govern distribution. So Blanc gives us a fresh formula: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." Each individual should have what he finds necessary to the development of his capabilities, limited naturally by the ability of society to supply these needs. So, "From everyone according to his faculties, that is his Duty: To everyone according to his needs: that is his due."

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865)

Proudhon was an anti-utopian anarchist who embraced liberty as the supreme virtue. He was born in Besançon, thirty-seven years after Fourier. His parents were poor, and young Proudhon earned his way through school by taking care of cows, acting as a waiter in restaurants, and at similar occupations. He was an honor student, but he was obliged to withdraw from school in order to take a job as printer. Later he received a pension of 1500 francs from the Acádemie de Besançon, given to promising students in the fields of literature and science.

In 1840, after a course of study in political economy, Proudhon wrote his famous book, What is Property? His equally famous answer, Property Is Theft, displeased the Academy and there was some talk of withdrawing his pension; but he held it for the regular period. In 1846 he published his Système des Contradictions Economiques ou Philosophie de la Misère, in which he criticizes socialist and communist theories.

In 1847 Proudhon was settled in Paris. He took no part in the Revolution of February, 1848, contending that, as all forms of government were bad it did not matter which faction triumphed. After the revolution, he was elected by a large majority to the Constituent Assembly of the Department of the Seine, and during this period he attempted to found a bank which would operate by granting gratuitous credit, but in this he failed completely.

For his violent speeches Proudhon suffered three years of imprisonment at Paris. Since he aimed at economic rather than political innovations, he accepted the second empire, and lived in comparative quiet till the publication of his work, *De la Justice dans la révolution et dans l'eglise* (1858), in which he attacked the church and other existing institutions. To escape imprisonment he fled to Brussels, returning later to France in broken health. He died at Passy on January 16, 1865.

Personally, Proudhon was one of the most remarkable figures of modern France. His life was marked by severe simplicity. Although he was opposed to the socialism current in the France of his day, he was, nevertheless, both in words and deeds a son of the people. Always vigorous, he was often brilliant and original.

Proudhon's aim was to realize a science of society resting on the principles of justice, liberty and equality. Because he believed that a perfect state founded on these principles could not be realized immediately, he attacked the schools of Saint-Simon and Fourier for thinking that society could be changed off-hand by a ready-made and complete scheme of reform. In *What Is Property*? Proudhon presented his principal ideas: the iniquity of private property, the doctrine of labor time as a measure of value, and the philosophy of his anarchist movement.

Proudhon's society would possess several characteristics.

In the first place it would be free of government. The organization he desired was one on collective principles, a free association which would take account of the division of labor and which would maintain the personality both of the man and the citizen. Connected with this was Proudhon's famous paradox of anarchy, by which he meant that through the ethical processes of men government should become unnecessary. "Government of man by man," he says, "is oppression. The highest perfection of society is found in the union of order and anarchy." In the second place, in Proudhon's view, society would contain no private property. Proudhon was not opposed to private possession, providing it was secured by labor. But one should not rob another by charging for the use of instruments of labor, by exacting rent, profit, or interest. The theory of labor, therefore, demands the abolition of property, in order that everyone may have free access to the soil and to the instruments of labor. In the third place, Proudhon desired a society in which there would be a perfect equality of remuneration on the principle that the duration of labor is the just measure of value.

In social change Proudhon distinguished between the transition and the perfection of achievement. Thus he advocated the founding of a national bank from which the workers would be able to obtain the instruments of labor without price. The bank would issue paper money in the form of checks in exchange

for commodities deposited in it. The bank would organize branches in all parts of France, and would furnish gratuitous credit to all who needed it.

When Proudhon presented his plan of free association before the Constituent Assembly for adoption in 1848 it was rejected emphatically by a vote 693 to 2.

Proudhon's Philosophy of Poverty was published in 1846. Our introduction to Karl Marx in this study is to a polemist in the field of political economy. The Poverty of Philosophy, published by Marx in 1847, was a reply provoked by Proudhon's The Philosophy of Poverty. Marx delivered a stinging criticism of Proudhon and his position. Proudhon is described as the metaphysician of political economy, treating the economic process as an abstraction. Here Marx states clearly the relation between social and political revolution (for him every social revolution must be a political revolution), and criticizes vehemently the theory of public works, fiat money, cooperative workshops, free credit, and class theory of the state, characteristic of bourgeois socialism. Marx accuses Proudhon of not understanding dialectic movement and therefore of being unable to explain history. So Proudhon according to Marx, was forced to suggest an arbitrary remedy for capitalism which was unrelated to the historical facts. Marx says,

> Thus, if we are to believe M. Proudhon, taxes

> remedy the drawbacks of monopoly; the balance of trade, the drawbacks of taxes; landed property, the drawbacks of credit.[16]

Referring to the socialists and communists as the theoreticians of the proletarian class, Marx writes:

> So long as the proletarian is not sufficiently developed to constitute a class, and consequently so long as the struggle itself of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie has not assumed a political character, and the productive forces are not yet sufficiently developed in the bosom of the bourgeoisie itself to enable us to catch a glimpse of the material conditions necessary for emancipation of the proletariat and for the formation of a new society, these theoreticians are merely Utopians who, to meet the wants of the oppressed classes, improvise systems and go in search of a regenerating science. But in the measure that history moves forward and with it the struggle of the proletariat assumes clearer outlines, they no longer need to seek science in their minds; they have only to take note of what is happening before their eyes and to become the mouthpiece of this.[17]

In the Communist Manifesto Marx and Engels refer to these same theoreticians as the representatives of "conservative or bourgeois socialism." It is clear that Marx enters the field of political economy fighting against something, as the opponent of the kind of socialism represented by Proudhon and his followers.

The objective of our study so far has been to prepare for the understanding of Karl Marx through an understanding of his social background. It has been stated that the rise of

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[16] Emile Burns, ed., A Handbook of Marxism, p. 358, from The Poverty of Philosophy, by Marx.

[17] Ibid., p. 369.

socialism provides the social milieu in which Marx appears on the social scene. But Marx resisted the socialism to which he was indebted and in the end that resistance produced a new kind of socialism.

b. The Bias of Karl Marx

As in Chapter I it was deemed necessary and proper to describe the bias of the writer of this thesis, so it is now in order to mention the fact that Marx approached ideals and social institutions with certain preconceptions. Writing to this point Hook says:

> Marx regarded those who restricted themselves to an objective description of social behavior, in which all notions of "what ought to be" are ruled out, as apologists of the existing order and of the ideals which social institutions embodied. And those who set up their "ought to be" as a categorical imperative, in independence of the limiting conditions of the given historical situation, he dismissed as Utopians.[18]

It is clear that Marx expected the social analyst to have a point of view which was hiw own. In this regard, Marx was an example of what he believed. He was an anti-religious revolutionary. When he was six years old, his family passed from the profession of Judaism to Christianity, and he lost, therefore, the traditions of the faith of his ancestors without assimilating the traditions of Christianity. As far as religious ideas and criticism are concerned Marx relied principally

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18. Sidney Hook, Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx, p. 69.

upon Feuerbach's criticism of religion. History assumed the place of religion in his system. When the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher was published in 1844 by Ruge and Marx, an article appeared, under the title "Introduction to a Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right" in which Marx sketched elements of his system which were elaborated later. Following the lead of Feuerbach, he took the position in respect to religion which is commonly associated with him:

> Man makes religion; religion does not make man. Religion, indeed, is the self-consciousness and the self-feeling of the man who either has not yet found himself, or else (having found himself) has lost himself once more.
>
> Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the feelings of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of unspiritual conditions. It is the opium of the people.
>
> The people cannot be really happy until it has been deprived of illusory happiness by the abolition of religion. The demand that the people should shake itself free of illusion as to its own condition is the demand that it should abandon a condition which needs illusion.[19]

Now this negative evaluation of religion is an element in the attitude with which he approaches social phenomena.

Engels, in his funeral oration, declared, "For, before all else, Marx was a revolutionist." It is hardly necessary to state that Marx was not unique in assuming such a rôle. He was born at a time when men of independence and originality of character were forced into becoming revolutionists.

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19. Otto Ruhle, Karl Marx: His Life and Work, quoted, p. 57.

Concerning Marx's attitude toward the state we shall speak later; it is enough to say here that he disdained the despotism of the Prussian State and never bowed before it, preferring rather to go into exile.

During the spring and summer of 1844, Marx was in Paris, during which time he studied the great revolution of 1789 and the historical literature of "Third Estate" in which the history of France, dating back to the eleventh century, was interpreted in terms of the class struggle.[20] From September, 1845, to August, 1846, Engels and Marx were associated in a writing project. The German Ideology was one of the things produced. While in the Theses on Feuerbach, Marx had described man as being engaged in the process of making history, in The German Ideology Marx and Engels assign to man a rôle in history which is definitely revolutionary. The following passages are illustrative:

> The first premise of all history is of course the existence of living human individuals. The first matter of fact to be established is therefore the bodily organization of these individuals and their relation thus given to the rest of nature.
>
> We can distinguish men from animals by consciousness, religion, or whatever we like. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce the means of life, a step which is conditioned by their bodily organization. In producing their means of life, men indirectly produce their material life itself.

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[20] Karl Mehring, Karl Marx, Chapter II.

> The social organization and the state issue perpetually from the life-process of definite individuals, but from these individuals not as they may appear in their own or another's imagination, but as they really are, that is, as they act, as they materially produce—thus as they act under definite material limitations, premises and conditions independent of their will.[21]

In Chapter 31 of Capital, Marx makes an explicit appeal to force as the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. Marx and Engels were active as revolutionary propagandists in relation to contemporary events—especially the revolutionary events of 1848-51 in France and Germany and the Paris Commune of 1871. Therefore a thorough grasp of Marx's thought requires not only a knowledge of his social background but also a recognition of his anti-religious, revolutionary motivation. Finally, comprehension of Marx's system requires an understanding of the method employed by Marx in his investigations. To a consideration of his method we turn now.

c. The Method of Marx

At the outset it is necessary to stress the significance of the method of Marx for his whole system. Cole affirms that "Marx's method is integral, not only to his conclusions, but to the entire basis of historical study on which his conclusions rest."[22] And Hook considers Marx's method his unique contribution to the solution of social problems.[23]

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[21] Max Eastman, ed., Capital and Other Writings, pp. 8-9, from The German Ideology.

[22] G. D. H. Cole, What Marx Really Meant, p. 6.

[23] Hook, Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx, p. 70.

The theory at the basis of all conscious socialist activity is Marxian (modern Scientific Socialism). While he was a man of action, Marx was also a philosopher. He believed that appeal should be made to general grounds to justify any course of action. General statements of this kind make up what we call _theory_. If these statements have the further character of being checked by experience we call them _scientific_ theory. Marx and Engles were quick to recognize indebtedness to Kant, Fichte, and Hegel, as well as to the French Utopians and Owen. Of course they unhesitatingly admitted that they had learned most from Hegel, the master of dialectics. The dialectics of Marx and Engels are rooted directly in Hegelian dialectics. Marx adopted from Hegel the concept of the dialectical process and it became in his system of thought _dialectical_ _materialism_. It is historical materialism which is the Marxist theory of society and history. Marxism might be termed the science of the ever-changing history of society. Marx was an empiricist who believed firmly in the reality of change. A clarifying word comes from Cole in regard to Marx's use of the term _materialism_. He writes:

> Marx called his conception of history "materialist", because he was determined to mark it off sharply from the metaphysical Idealism of Hegel and his followers. Where he wrote "materialist", it would be natural in our day to write "realist"; for it is Realism, and not Materialism, that we are accustomed to contrast with Idealism as a philosophical point of view.[24]

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[24] Cole, _op_. _cit_., p. 12.

The temptation is to connect the term materialism with the view of life which asserts the supremacy of matter over mind, or the denial of the existence of mind except as a derivative quality of matter. It seems, however, that Marx did not set mind over against matter in such a fashion, but that he contended that in the world of men and things, mind and matter interpenetrate.

1) Sources of the Marxian Philosophy

Since the authors of the philosophy of Scientific Socialism admit their dependence upon previous thinkers, it may be instructive to trace the connections. Plekhanov, the founder of Russian Marxism, has pointed out that Marx and Engels have drawn upon Spinoza in shaping their philosophy. Spinoza may be considered kin to the dialectical materialists in his recognition of an objective world. Feuerbach felt the influence of Spinoza upon his materialistic conceptions. Spinoza indicated that there are four ways by which knowledge is attained:

1. From the words of others;
2. By indefinite experience;
3. Knowledge of the essence of things as derived from other things, but not adequately;
4. Knowledge of things as gained (a) exclusively through their own essence, and (b) through the knowledge of their approximate cause.

It is the fourth method that supplies dependable knowledge.

Dialectical materialists take this theory of knowledge as acceptable as far as it goes. The main point here is that Spinoza was convinced of the possibility of knowing adequately the one Substance, which he called "God" or "Nature", and which he conceived as existing independently of consciousness. Spinoza may be called a materialist because he recognizes a material world, a substance having extension. Substance is a concept that does not need the concept of another thing from which it must be formed; it is absolute, infinite being. One may conclude that Spinoza himself reflects the influence of materialists of antiquity such as Democritus and Heraclitus, and also of Bacon, the founder of modern empiricism. Even the influence of Descartes, the rationalist, may also be present.

While dialectical materialism makes its starting point with Spinoza, it strips his thought of its theological terminology. It is necessary to remember also the most important difference between this philosopher's system and dialectical materialism, namely, that the latter emphasizes continuous self-movement and therefore the logical categories of its reasoning are not static, while Spinozism rest upon rather fixed and permanent geometric constructions. In addition, Spinoza's substance was metaphysical, extension and mind were always present like body and soul. On the contrary, for dialectical materialism, the attribute of time is a significant factor, for new qualities (including mind) emerge in time when matter reaches a more highly organized stage of development.

2) Kant

Kant's problem was to reach a satisfactory synthesis of the empirical world with the world of the subjective reason. To do this he forced the understanding of experience into fixed static, *a priori* conceptions. Sense impressions, the empirical raw material, are arranged in space and time by means of certain categories which do not exist outside the mind.

To understand Kant it is necessary to remember that he distinguished sharply between the *form* of knowledge and its empirical *content*. The *form* of knowledge is furnished by the structure peculiar to the mind, which is a universal characteristic of all rational experience and therefore can be relied upon for the formulation of laws of science. All particular experiences occur in space of three dimensions and in a time series, thus the space-time continuum is the condition of every sensation and determines every empirical content. The percepts arranged in this way are further organized under concepts, the so-called categories of understanding, quantity, quality, ~~causality~~, relation, and modality. The external world, then, is characterized by chaos which only the intellect can put into order and properly relate. So Kant concludes that reason does not get its laws *a priori* from nature, but imposes them on it. The object (the thing-in-itself) acts upon the subject, and the subject reacts by the production of knowledge. But this knowledge does not correspond to the "object", since

in itself the object is unknowable. The "phenomena", the representation which it produces in the mind, are knowable. It is clear, then, that the empirical material is conditioned by the intellectual functions of the experiencing agent. Consequently, classic and cosmic idealism is converted in Kant's system into epistomological and personal idealism.

It remains to be observed that Kant's philosophy includes a highly developed metaphysical emphasis. Metaphysical thought proceeds from the premise that nature is always a unit in itself, moving in closed cycles and in steady equilibrium like the heavenly bodies. By analogy these ideals were applied to the organic world and to human history. And here is the point at which Kant and dialectical materialism clash most violently, for Kant insisted that there cannot be inherent contradictions in the workings of the mind or in the concepts of things, and, that if any such contradictions did appear they must be due to the phenomenal character of the world we know. For our thought here Kant is important, particularly, because he leads to the interpretation of Hegel.

3) Fichte

Fichte forms the link between Kant and Hegel. He felt the need to overcome the dualism between Kant's "phenomenon" and the "noumena" (the thing-in-itself). He endeavored to resolve this dualism dialectically by his "idealistic monism". In short, he united the objective world with the subjective

world. The non-ego (the thing-in-itself of Kant) becomes in Fichte's system a part of the ego or self, outside of which nothing exists. Both object and subject are the product of the absolute ego, which is not metaphysically static. It is dynamic and expresses itself dialectically, and this dialectical process goes on by an inner necessity of the ego. The contradiction between the subjective ego and the objective non-ego is overcome by mutual limitations and synthesis. The dialectical idealism of Fichte, unlike the older metaphysical idealism, is thus active and creative.

4) Schelling

The thought of Schelling represents another step towards Hegel and also forms a link connecting Hegel with Kant. Fichte had emphasized the ego. Schelling reversed Fichte's emphasis by stressing the non-ego, nature or the objective world, and thus synthesizing it realistically with the ego and the spirit of the absolute, which becomes conscious in the subjective experience of man. In Schelling we have a return to Spinoza, for the non-ego of Schelling (his absolute) is also Spinoza's God or nature.

While observing the similarity between Spinoza and Schelling it is very important to see also the difference between them. Schelling's absolute (unlike Spinoza's) is dynamic and develops dialectically. It is his absolute which becomes the absolute spirit of Hegel, and in this way Fichte and Schelling,

in developing the philosophy of Kant, linked him to Hegel. In Hegel the Kantian dualism of objective world and "pure reason" has been effectively overcome and "pure reason" emerges as the source of knowledge and the Creator of being itself.

5) Hegel

The glance at Schelling's thought places us in a position to understand Hegel's idea of "nature" as the estrangement of the moving "absolute spirit". In Hegel's scheme the world is a logical process at the basis of which lies the "logical idea." In this logically conditioned process each phase appears as a necessary link. The process unfolds by an inner dialectical necessity. All being is contained in the "absolute spirit." The objects of experience are only attributes of thought and thought is being. Reason and being are the same. Objects are transformed into thought and therefore the subjective and objective blend into the "absolute spirit" which is the essence of the Universe. Absolute spirit or transcendental thought (Reason) thinks itself as a logical concept, the development of which is self-generative through inner contradictions. In brief, this is the essential picture of the Hegelian dialectical method.

Hegel pictured historical evolution as the outcome of opposing forces in nature: that historical tendency (the thesis) generates in the course of its development a contrary force (the antithesis) which, in the fulness of time and circumstance

proceeds to overcome the former; the struggle results in the creation of a new stage or tendency (the synthesis) into which remnants of the old are absorbed.

We note in Hegel that the "absolute spirit" passes through the dialectical process just as Fichte's "ego" did, the difference being that the Hegelian "absolute spirit" is an objectively real essence of the world process existing independent of consciousness. Contrary to Kant, Hegel accepts _contradiction_ and recognizes it as the dynamic of the cosmic and historical process. _Contradiction leads forward._ It was this principle which was appropriated by Marx and Engels and applied to history.

Now Hegelianism had a strong theological bent, and one may rightly wonder how it is related to Marxism which is materialistic. Well, Marx was not interested in the metaphysics of Hegel. He merely converted Hegel's "absolute spirit" into simply "nature" or "matter" in his own system. Engels describes Hegelianism as "materialism turned right side up." The dialectic movement of the absolute spirit is the story of the development of thought. Applied to nature and man, it is the story of the evolution of the world and of society in all its aspects. Marxists believe that an understanding of the dialectical process and the application of it to facts scientifically established equips one with a _universal method_ not only for understanding the past, but also for predicting the

proximate future and directing it as one sees fit. The significant contribution Hegel made to Marxian thought is not his hypothesis of the absolute spirit, but rather the fact that he developed in his "dialectic" or "logic" the laws of the movements of the absolute spirit. These laws, divested of their theological associations, appear as the laws of the movement of nature in the Marxian system, and become the essence of the philosophy of dialectical materialism.

Summarily speaking, dialectical materialism, the central principle of the Marxist teaching about society and history, contains elements from Spinoza, such as his idea of substance or "matter", emphasizing mind and extension, the qualitative and the quantitative, as real and inseparable attributes of nature, existing outside and independent of consciousness. In this connection, matter means nature which acts upon the senses and calls forth perception. It is objective existence or reality. Dialectical materialism is a direct continuation of the Hegelian method in which the entire world both of natural history and of intelligence was presented as a process, that is, in perpetual motion, transformation, and development. According to Hegel, the dialectics is the self-development of the concept. The absolute concept existed from the beginning of time and develops by itself, passing through all of the stages which are contained within it. Then it separates from itself, appearing in nature, where it develops anew, but

unconsciously, taking on the rôle of natural necessity. In man it again becomes conscious, and in history this self-consciousness again moves upward from the bottom until the absolute concept finally returns to itself. Hegel's system was strictly deterministic, although idealistic. In analyzing Hegel, Marx found that his system contained three elements, Spinoza's substance, Fichte's self-consciousness, and the necessarily contradictory Hegelian unity of the two—the "absolute spirit". Marx and Engels accepted the Hegelian principle of dialectics, evaluating it in terms of materialistic dialectics.

While dialectical materialism inherits elements from Hegel and the classic German idealism of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, it is not to be considered an eclective philosophy, but rather the fusion of a long line of philosophical movements into a higher philosophical synthesis. The expansion of the idea of dialectical materialism can be traced far beyond its sources. The central idea of Hegel's logic, contradiction, which was referred to above, became the revolutionary weapon of his revolting students, first of Feuerbach, then of Marx. Engels, and others.

6) Feuerbach

During the forties of the nineteenth century there was much interest in the works of Hegel in Germany. Russia, and other countries. In Germany the radicals in the movement were

known as the young Hegelians. They clothed radical ideas in philosophical garb, and their criticism was directed primarily against religion, although Prussian autocracy was not overlooked. Ludwig Feuerbach, author of The Essence of Christianity, was one of the young Hegelians. The thesis of Feuerbach's treatise was that all religious values, including God, are human values to which a supernatural sanction has been attached by human imagination. Man is not the image of God: God is the image of man. Since nature, in Feuerbach's thinking, is the basis of spirit, it should also be the basis of philosophy. He prepared the way for the break with Hegel and for making the new materialism which was the direct antithesis of Hegel's idealism. His approach concentrated upon the study of the material world with man as its integral part. Although Feuerbach revolted against Hegelian idealism, he also refused to be identified with French materialism which he described as "old metaphysics presented as physics." He does not deny that his system is materialistic, but he wants it disassociated from that of the classical materialists. Properly Feuerbach may be called the forerunner of modern organic materialism. He separated theology from philosophy and prepared the way for the new philosophical synthesis which was achieved in the dialectical materialist philosophy of Marx and Engels.

Feuerbach ranks as a modern materialistic humanist. He did not push materialism to the dialectical stage. He broke

away from theology and yet failed to develop the logic of his anthropological principles. He ignored the actual environment of man which so greatly determines his behavior. He deified man and his love-life, failing to see the influence of the environment upon them. The cultus of Humanity was the heart of Feuerbach's religion. It was against this abstraction of man in his philosophy that Marx revolted in the end. Feuerbach never embraced materialism in the modern sense and yet he must be duly accredited as the direct bridge between Hegelianism and Marxism.

7) French and English Materialism

Mere mention should be made here that French and English materialism had its influence upon the development of the thought of Marx and Engels, as has been pointed out above. Although French and English materialism did not provide Marx and Engels with any fresh, positive ideas, it did, nevertheless, serve as an impetus to them in the development of their own conception of materialism. From Marx's point of view the common weakness of all these social systems was that they all counted on the goodwill and the reasonableness of the bourgeoisie, and on their peaceful conversion to the realization of the necessity of social reforms or revolution. Furthermore, having been disappointed in the failure of political revolution, they tended to shy away from political action, and to help the poor working class simply because it needed to be

helped.

8) Marx and Engels

Marxian philosophy received its synthesis in the teachings of Marx and Engels. This synthesis has become the ground for further development in contemporary philosophy. Marx and Engels represent one of the most outstanding examples in history of friendship flowering in great intellectual creativity and coöperation. Though they were very different personalities they had profound affection for each other and their thinking fused in such a way in many instances as to make it difficult, if not impossible, to determine which ideas belong to one or the other.

The two men were the product of very different backgrounds, family traditions and social environments. Karl Marx was born in 1818 in Trier, in the Rhine province of Prussia, into a family with a tradition for learning. His father, a liberal lawyer, was very fond of the French encyclopedists and the materialist philosophers of the French Revolution. This prepared him for the break with the religion of his people. Karl Marx's grandfather was a Jewish Rabbi, but his father adopted Protestantism. This meant that the religious pattern in the family was not firmly set and thus that Karl grew up with a liberal education in a home situation which did not restrict independent thinking.

Frederick Engels' background was very different. He was

born in 1820, also in the Rhine province, the son of a rich merchant who was fanatically religious, pietistic and puritanical in habit and thought and quite incapable of understanding or appreciating the currents of liberal thought that were seizing the imagination of young German intellectuals. At the age of seventeen, Engels, influenced by the liberal criticism of the young Hegelians, divorced himself from the religion of his father and never returned to it. Much of Engels' bitterness towards religion can certainly be traced back to his reaction against his father's variety of religion as well as to his association with the progressive Hegelians.

Some of Marx's academic training was particular preparation for the contribution he was to make to the development of materialistic thought. His doctor's thesis, presented at the conclusion of his university course in 1841, was a comparative study of the ancient materialists, Democritus and Epicurus, pointing out the difference in their view of nature. In this work Marx was definitely an adherent of Hegel's idealism. In Berlin he belonged to the circle of "Left Hegelians" (sometimes called young, progressive or radical) who sought to draw atheistic and revolutionary conclusions from Hegel's philosophy. But in 1843, under the influence of Feuerbach, Marx and Engels accepted realistic humanism. While Hegel had freed the conception of history from natural mysticism and had made it dialectical, he had, nevertheless, committed another error. Marx wrote in the preface to the second edition of Capital

(Book I):

> The mystification which dialectic suffers in Hegel's hands by no means prevents him from being the first to present its general form of working in a comprehensive and conscious manner. With him it is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell.[25]

In a letter to Kugelmann, dated March 6, 1868, Marx wrote concerning a certain Thünen who was an author:

> He has published, firstly (proceeding from Carey), a Critical Foundation of Political Economy (about 500 pages) and secondly, a new National Dialectic (against the Hegelian). My book has buried him from both sides. He gave it notice because of his hatred for Roscher, etc. For the rest, half intentionally, and half from lack of insight, he commits deception. He knows very well that my method of development is not Hegelian, since I am a materialist and Hegel is an idealist. Hegel's dialectic is the basic form of all dialectic, but only after it has been stripped of its mystical form, and it is precisely this which distinguishes my method.[26]

Marx found Hegel limited not only by the extent of his own knowledge and by the extent and depth of the knowledge and conceptions of his own age, but also by his idealism. To Hegel the thoughts within the brain were not the more or less abstract pictures of actual things and processes, but, on the other hand, things and their evolution were only the externalization of the "Idea", existing somewhere from eternity before the world existed.

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25. The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Dona Torr, ed., quotation from Capital, p. 103.
26. Ibid., p. 234.

Ludwig Feuerbach, who up until 1836 had been on the faculty of the University of Bonn, began after 1836, to criticize theology and to turn towards materialism, which by 1841 had gained dominance in his conceptions. He wrote a number of books, the most disturbing of which was The Essence of Christianity. Concerning his books, Engels later wrote in his "Ludwig Feuerbach!" "One must himself have experienced the liberating effect of these books. We at once became Feuerbachists." And again he wrote, "There is no other way for you to get to the truth except through the firebrook. The firebrook is the purgatory of the present." In German the name Feuerbach means firebrook.

In 1845, Marx and Engels published The Holy Family, which is a vigorous criticism of the speculative philosophy presented by Bruno Bauer and Company. This book is based upon the anthropological and humanistic principles which the authors had accepted from Feuerbach, who had first applied them to the analysis of religion. In The Holy Family, Marx and Engels carry the Feuerbachian principles over into the sphere of society with its laws, customs, and morals, government and production. The most significant fact about the book is that it exhibited the transition of Marx and Engels from Hegelian speculative philosophy to dialectical materialism through Feuerbachian humanism. Feuerbach was the first to point out the reactionary nature of speculative philosophy in this period. In

The Holy Family the authors' conclusion is that man gets his knowledge with the aid of his senses from the natural world which it is possible for him to control. While they recognized that man was a part of nature, they concluded that for this very reason he was also to be the agent for the control of nature. Gradually Marx and Engels began to wean away from Feuerbach and, in his theses on Feuerbach, Marx sets forth the reason, foremost among which was the abstract, introspective character of Feuerbach's materialism. His materialism was not sufficiently consistent and comprehensive.

From among the many writings of Karl Marx—essays, tracts, correspondence, and fuller works—some of the more important are: the Critique of Political Economy; The Holy Family; Capital; Value, Price, and Profit; The Poverty of Philosophy; and The Communist Manifesto. Friedrich Engels, himself a writer of distinction (Socialism, Utopian and Scientific; Anti-Dühring; Origin of the Family; Private Property and the State, etc), collaborated with Marx on several of his works.

9) The Nature of Dialectical Materialism

Idealism and materialism are two ways of looking at the world. We have already seen how philosophy of the Hegelian type made "absolute spirit" the cardinal principle and how Feuerbach idealized humanity. The utopianism of Owen, Fourier, and Saint-Simon was, in varying forms, a vision of ideal human society, imaginatively formulated, forceful in its indictment

of private property, but profoundly lacking in historical perspective and largely out of touch with economic realities. Almost no attention was given the details of social process; it was believed that a setting forth of an ideal and example would be sufficient to guarantee the desired social consequences. What's more, reflecting the eighteenth-century view of social phenomena as fixed and constant, the utopian projects were essentially static and perfectionist.

Materialism is, in general, opposition to idealism. Marx and Engels praised materialist philosophy as challenging, critical, and revolutionary. While materialism reaches back to the earliest known school of Greek philosophers, the Milesians (Thales, Anaximander, et al), growing out of their interest in the primary stuff of the Universe, it received peculiar development in Great Britain, according to Engels. In a quotation from Marx, Engels gives a clear, descriptive statement on materialism:

> The real progenitor of English materialism is Bacon. To him natural philosophy is the only true philosophy, and physics based upon the experience of the senses is the chiefest part of natural philosophy. Anaxagoras and his homoeomeriae, Democritus and his atoms, he often quotes as his authorities. According to him the senses are infallible and the source of all knowledge. All science is based on experience, and consists in subjecting the data furnished by the senses to a rational method of investigation. Induction analysis, comparison, observation, experiment, are the principal forms of such a rational method. Among the qualities inherent in matter, motion is the first and foremost, not only in the form of mechanical and mathematical motion, but chiefly in the form of an impulse, a vital spirit,

> a tension—a "qual", to use a term of Jacob Böhme's—of matter.[27]

Marx and Engels conclude that the struggle between idealism and materialism is no mere struggle of abstract principles. It is essentially a reflection of the contradictions and conflicts in modern class-divided society. Thus the outlook of the militant proletariat must be materialist.

It is important to indicate here that a clear difference must be made between mechanistic materialism and dialectical materialism. Mention has already been made of the fact that modern materialism stems from the French philosophy of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. We traced its dialectical aspect directly to Hegel. While French materialism is an outgrowth of the Newtonian mechanics, dialectical materialism is a reinterpretation of Hegelian dialectics through Feuerbach, Marx and Engels. It appears, therefore, that the mechanistic and dialectic trends existed alongside each other in the nineteenth century and they were absorbed in the social movement. The controversy between Engels and Dühring was over the question of mechanism and dialectics in materialism. Engels defended the dialectical position against Dühring's mechanism.

As modern materialism grew up it was affected deeply by the development of science. The first phase in the development of modern science (from the sixteenth to the eighteenth

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27. Frederick Engels, On Historical Materialism, p. 6, quotation from The Holy Family (Engels).

century) was characterized primarily by extraordinary achievements in Mechanics. While physics and biology lagged behind in development, the contributions of Newton pushed the field of mechanics forward to a high stage of perfection. Thus mechanics dominated science and the philosophy that arose from it may be termed mechanical materialism. Now mechanical materialism viewed the world as a complicated machine, which has been wound up some time and then set going according to fixed, unchangeable laws to all eternity. The view left no room for evolution or any sort of real change. This kind of thinking was styled "metaphysical" by Marx and Engels; that is, it saw everything in terms of hard and fast absolutes, polar opposites which mutually excluded each other and relied upon formal logic as final law. A rather long passage from Engels will illumine the point here:

> The analysis of nature into individual parts, the grouping of the different natural processes and objects in definite classes, the study of the internal anatomy of organized bodies in their manifold forms—these were the fundamental conditions of the gigantic strides in our knowledge of nature that have been made during the last four hundred years. But this method of work has also left us as a legacy the habit of observing natural objects and processes in isolation, apart from their connection with the vast whole; of observing them in repose, not in motion; as constants, not as essentially variables; in their death, not in their life. And when this way of looking at things was transferred by Bacon and Locke from natural science to philosophy, it begot the narrow, metaphysical mode of thought peculiar to the last century.
>
> To the metaphysician, things and their mental

> reflexes, ideas, are isolated, are to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, are objects of investigation fixed, rigid, given once for all. He thinks in absolutely irreconcilable antitheses. "His communication is 'yea, yea; nay, nay'; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." For him a thing either exists or does not exist; a thing cannot at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another; cause and effect stand in a rigid antithesis to the other.[28]

In addition to the limitations of the mechanistic approach as such, mechanistic materialism had difficulty whenever it came to deal with human society. It could condemn certain historical events and yet be unable to explain the things condemned. The nature of a thing depends on the relations of its parts. This is even more true of inorganic mechanism, just as it is that man is more than the sum total of the elements which compose his organism. The watch is only a watch if its parts are set in proper relations. Otherwise it is only so many parts. This is a very important point to the dialectical materialist and therefore makes him a belligerent opponent of mechanism. For the dialectical materialist synthesis is a key concept. But here is revealed an organismic view of society, criticism of which will come later.

The unity of theory and practice. It is a significant feature of Marx's dialectical materialism that theory and action are declared inseparable. Reacting against the weakness

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[28] Frederick Engels, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, p. 20.

of the utopians, Marx insisted that theory is valid only if it is grounded in the material facts of existence. Intelligent action can result only from harmonious coöperation with the historical course of events—from a recognition of the material forces at work.

It becomes, therefore, the task of the Marxist, with the aid of dialectic, to analyze the laws of movement in society and to ascertain their direction, then to formulate the appropriate revolutionary strategy. On this principle hangs the whole revolutionary program of Marxism. The one relevant question to raise with reference to any possible course of action is: does this action, in these circumstances, promote the proletarian revolution?

The laws of dialectics. The generalizations from scientific analysis we commonly call scientific laws. These are derived from selected facts and phenomena referring to one or another aspect of being. But these generalizations do not show us the relations of the details to each other; in short, they do not give us the general laws of evolution. The dialectical method of Marx and Engels is offered as an instrument for arriving at such universal laws in the evolution of nature, society, and the workings of the human mind.

The emphasis of dialectic is on movement. Everything develops, everything is in relation to everything else and is constantly changing. It is, therefore, unscientific to view the world or any part of it in terms of fixed concepts. The

laws of dialectical process were originally formulated by Hegel and adopted by Engels and Marx. The following is the listing of the laws:

(1) The law of the transformation of quantity into quality, and vice-versa.

(2) The law of unity (interpenetration, identity) of opposites.

(3) The law of the negation of the negation.

The first law is essential for an understanding of the rise of new qualities, and also for understanding the quantitative effects which may follow the emergence of such new qualities. Illustrative of this law we may take the formula for drinking water, H_2O. If one atom of oxygen is added, we get peroxide of hydrogen, H_2O_2, which is a useful antiseptic, but not fit for drinking. Here a quantitative increase is accompanied by a qualitative change. In the passing of a liquid into a gas through boiling and into a solid through freezing, we have another example of the working of this law. In these instances, a change in state does not occur until suddenly a point is reached where a complete transformation is effected. With reference to history, the social revolution itself may be an illustration of a "leap" where accumulative quantitative alterations pass into qualitative stages. Overproduction of any commodity reduces the value or at least the price of the article, etc. This law insists on the importance of the "leap"

or "mutation" in the evolutionary process; it conjoins gradualism and non-gradualism in the same series in social evolution.

The second law, the law of the unity of opposites, asserts the essentially contradictory character of reality, and at the same time asserts that these "opposites" which are everywhere to be found do not remain in stark, metaphysical opposition, but also exist in unity. The Greeks knew this law, but its classical formulation has been given by Hegel. He describes this law in the passage that follows:

> Positive and negative are supposed to express an absolute difference. The two, however, are at bottom the same; the name of either might be transformed to the other. Thus, for example, debts and assets are not two particular, self-subsisting species of property. What is negative to the debtor is positive to the creditor. A way to the East is also a way to the West. Positive and negative are therefore intrinsically conditioned by one another, and are only in relation to each other. The North Pole of the magnet cannot be without the South Pole and vice-versa. If we cut a magnet in two, we have not a North Pole in one piece and a South Pole in the other. Similarly, in electricity, the positive and the negative are not two diverse and independent fluids. In opposition the difference is not confronted by any other.[29]

This law is quite often applied in mathematics. Since each negative quantity multiplied by itself gives a positive square, the negative quantity may be the square root of a number. Life and death are inseparable as illustrated by the process of metabolism. This law may be seen at work in the transition of the reptile into a bird. Again, the organism is

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[29] Hegel, The Logic of Hegel, William Wallace, trans., p. 222.

both multiplicity and unity, of which the life of the cell and its relation to the organism is a good illustration. In the economic sphere, production and consumption are opposites and yet they are a unity. Lenin built his theory of the class struggle during the transitional period from capitalism to socialism under the guidance of this law. Classes in their evolution interpenetrate. Proletarian and peasant, bourgeois and feudal aristocracy obscure their class differences. Capitalist and worker interpenetrate. But each interpenetration has its break and it is up to the revolutionary philosopher to be ready when the break occurs to conduct the social process to a higher synthesis. In the interpenetration and application of this law it is necessary to guard against letting the "unity" swallow up the fundamental "opposition". The unity is really only relative and temporary, but what is of highest significance from the point of view of dialectical materialism is rather the motion and change which follow from the conflict of the opposite.

The third law is the law of the negation of the negation. This law states one of the most characteristic features of evolutionary process in all fields. In a way, development repeats itself, repeats the stages already passed, but repeats them in a different way, on a higher plane. Development assumes the shape of spirals, not a straight line. This law also is commonly used in mathematics. For instance, (-a)

multiplied by itself becomes (a^2), i.e., the negation of the negation has accomplished a new synthesis. On another level, the grain of corn died, i.e., negates itself, after it had produced the blade, the flower and the new more numerous and differentiated seeds. In the social process the law of the negation of negation has received wide application in Marx's studies of economics and the class struggle, as we shall see subsequently.

And now a word about the application of dialectic to the mind of man. In dealing with the laws of dialectic this treatment seems necessarily disjointed. It must be emphasized, however, that these are different aspects of one dialectic. The dialectical method teaches us to take all phenomena of history, nature, and thought, as a whole, in connection with all the conditions that give rise to them. Marx argued that consciousness did not exist previously as "pure" consciousness. "My relation to my environment is my consciousness." Thus consciousness exists objectively but not as a special "spiritual substance." In viewing the path of knowledge and the forms of its movement, we have the basis for the theory of knowledge of dialectical materialism. Dialectic logic differs from the old formal logic in so far as the latter claims to be "pure" reasoning, constructed from abstract elements of the thinking process. Dialectic logic consists in a rational grasp of the actual moving and changing world in its entirety—in its concrete relations—and it thus recognizes the contradictory elements

which reveal themselves in actual being.

Formal logic deals with syllogism. It is useful and necessary in treating the abstractions that are formed in the first stage of thinking. The essence of its technique is to keep apart, to prevent confusing the distinctions that have been made. It is therefore founded upon a development of certain primary principles about identity and contradiction, such as, for instance, the "law of the excluded middle" which declares that a thing either is one thing or is not one thing. It cannot be ("A") and ("not A") simulteneously. Within certain limits this logic is justified and even essential. But inasmuch as it is based on taking abstractions as temporary and therefore necessarily overlooking their inter-connections and the development of one quality or thing into another, formal logic is unable to recognize the inner process of change, to show its dialectical character. In the passage which follows Marx makes it clear that the mind operates on materials after the fact:

> Man's reflections on the forms of social life, and consequently, also, his scientific analysis of those forms, take a course directly opposite to that of their actual historical development. He begins, post festum, with the results of the process of development ready to hand before him. The characters that stamp products as commodities, and whose establishment is a necessary preliminary to the circulation of commodities, have already acquired the stability of natural, self-understood forms of social life, before man seeks to decipher, not their historical character, for in his eyes they are

immutable, but their meaning.[30]

This passage makes evident the difference between the dialectical approach and the approach of formal logic.

We are now prepared to make a summary statement of this discussion of the general nature of the dialectical approach as interpreted by Marx and Engels. In the language of classical philosophical terminology, it can be said that Marx and Engels dealt chiefly with three philosophical problems:

1. The ontological, in which they took the side of materialism as against idealism.

2. The epistemological, in which they stood for a scientifically tested realism.

3. A synthesis of the ontological and epistemological resulting in a solution of the problem of the analysis of the phenomena of nature, society and the human mind.

2. Karl Marx and the Proletariat

Taking the position that "Marx was evidently not born Marxist," we have described his social and intellectual background. We have located his dependence upon French socialism, English political economy, and German philosophy. Attention has been directed to Marx's anti-religious, revolutionary bias. The development of his method has been traced and its significance emphasized. Hook provides a fine transitional statement

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[30] Karl Marx, Capital (Modern Library), p. 87.

in the following words:

> Just as in traditional theology thoughts in the mind of God created the world, so in Hegel's system the whole furniture of heaven and earth is the result of the development of unfolding of logical ideas. Marx abandoned the Hegelian dialectic because its logical processes were just as mysterious as the creation of Genesis.... In contradistinction to Hegel, Marx's dialectic method was applied primarily to human history and society. [31]

While for Hegel logic was history, for Marx history was viewed as logical. It needs now to be affirmed that the theoretical exposition of Marx's method can be illuminated by observing the method at work. Hook has explained that the Marxian methof and theory come closest together in the doctrine of the class struggle.[32] It is necessary to understand the class struggle, then, for it is in the class struggle that we meet the proletariat. Thus, at this point, we must turn back to observe how Marx arrives at the theory of class struggle. Here the principal facts of his life can be expected to throw light on the facts of his theory of history and society.

Biographical notes. Marx was not only brought up under favorable home conditions but he was exposed to the best in German culture and learning. At the universities of Bonn and Berlin he studied law out of respect for his father's desire, but his own inclination drove him to the study of history and

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[31] Sidney Hook, Toward the Understanding of Karl Marx. pp. 78-79.

[32] Ibid., p. 22f.

philosophy. This was a period when the thought of Hegel was dominant in the land. In 1841, Marx finished his studies and gained his doctor's degree, having presented a thesis On the Difference between the Democritean and the Epicurean Natural Philosophy. Bruno Bauer, Marx's good friend, had been invited to Bonn University to teach, and Marx moved to Bonn in the expectation of receiving an instructorship. But Bauer's appointment failed to be approved and Marx never had a chance. The whole German University system was dominated, at this time, by an autocratic, reactionary state. This disappointment in relation to his professional ambition was Marx's first serious disillusionment in life.

Marx's father had died in 1838. There was his mother to be cared for and Marx was eager to be married. In October, 1842, he moved to Cologne to become editor-in-chief of the Rheinische Zeitung, a paper founded by the radical bourgeoisie of the Rhine province. After subjecting the paper to hard censorship for a period, the government finally ordered its complete suppression by April 1, 1843. It is noteworthy that Marx started out as a believer in the Hegelian theory of the state. Hegel has defined the state as "the realization of the ethical idea," as the expression of Reason in which the real and reasonable wills of individuals were caught up in one great harmonious whole. But Marx's editorship of the Rheinische Zeitung afforded him a second concrete and bitter

experience of how material factors dictate the opportunities of men. In his own experience he had discovered a basis for the rejection of Hegel's conservatism and supernaturalism.

In 1843, Marx married Jenny von Westphalen, a childhood friend to whom he had been engaged for many years. Through all the hard years of a rugged revolutionary career, Jenny, daughter of a well-to-do family, proved a courageous friend and companion for Marx. Frau Marx bore six children, one of whom died soon after birth. Francisca and little Edgar, the only son, died early, Laura lived to marry Monsieur Lafargue, a medical student, and Jenny to marry Charles Lonquet, editor of a student socialist paper in Paris. Eleanor was desired by Lissagaray, the historian of the Commune, but Marx objected. After an unhappy free union experience with Edward Aveling, Eleanor committed suicide.

In the autumn of 1843, Marx moved to Paris to coöperate with Arnold Ruge in publishing a radical magazine. Here he became acquainted with Proudhon and other socialists and studied French socialism with intensity. In Paris Marx met also a group of German exiles, the greatest of whom was the poet Heine. In September, 1844, Friedrich Engels came to Paris to spend a few days. He was the son of a manufacturer at Barmen and from 1842 worked in a commercial house in Manchester, while at the same time he was studying social conditions in England. Marx and Engels had met previously in Cologne, with no particular enthusiasm. But in Paris there was a meeting

of minds and thus began an extraordinary friendship between the two men, which was to endure until the end. Both of them entered zealously into the life of the revolutionary groups in Paris. Here they had opportunity to challenge the various teachings of petty-bourgeois socialism and to formulate the theory and tactics of proletarian socialism.

Through the years Engels and Marx worked so closely together that Engels is often considered the mere shadow of Marx; but on the contrary, he was a man in his own right. His home offered him the advantages of prosperous bourgeois life. His mother was a cultured women and his father was wealthy, a partner in the textile firm of Ermin and Engels, which owned a cotton-spinning mill in Manchester. In the town in which his early years were spent Engels saw the privations and the debauchery of the workers, brought on by the new industrial system. It was primarily as a student of economic developments and problems in England that Engels was able to make his most substantial contribution to the thought of Karl Marx. Reacting against the church, Engels came to know the Young Hegelians and consequently was exposed to German philosophy, although he never mastered this field as Marx did. Engels possessed unusual linguistic talents and he spent considerable time in the study of military strategy. The correspondence of Marx and Engels bear unquestionable testimony of the high value which he placed upon the latter's opinions and the genuine collaboration that characterized their forty years of professional

activity. Indeed Engels was Marx's most severe critic, his interpreter to the world, and his financial savior.

In the months between the suppression of the Rheinische Zeitung and the publication of Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, Marx prepared two articles. "Introduction to a Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right" was published in the first section of the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, and Marx himself later summarized the content of this article in the following words:

> My investigation culminated in the recognition that legal and political forms are not comprehensible of themselves, nor yet explicable in terms of the so-called evolution of the human mind, but are rooted in the material conditions of life, whose totality Hegel, following the example of English and French eighteenth century writers, subsumed under the name of "civil society"; and in the recognition that the anatomy of civil society is to be sought for in political economy.[33]

This article represented a fundamental clarification of views pointing towards Marx's future social theory.

The second article was also published in the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, and was a treatment of the Jewish problem. Marx used as his point of departure an article on the same subject which had been contributed to the Deutsche Jahrbücher by Bruno Bauer. The Jewish problem had reference to the matter of the liberation of the Jews from their feudal status and the granting to them of political and civil rights. Bauer had contended that the Christian was more capable of

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33. Otto Rhule, Karl Marx, quoted on p. 61.

emancipation than the Jew and that the emancipation of the Jew must lead him through Christianity by way of the Hegelian dialectic. Marx proceeded to examine the secular basis of Judaism. He discovered it in practical necessity and self-interest. Marx declared buying and selling to be the secular cult of the Jews, and money to be his secular God. And thus Marx concluded:

> Very well then: emancipation from buying and selling and from money, that is to say, from practical real Judaism, would be the self-emancipation of our time. An organization of society which abolishes the necessary conditions of buying and selling, would make the Jew impossible. His religious consciousness would evaporate in the clear and vital atmosphere of society.[34]

It seems here that, in contrast to Bauer's position, Marx has converted the question of the relation of political emancipation to religion into the question of the relation of political emancipation to human emancipation. In Marx's thought the political note increases in power, and in this fact Marx has advanced beyond the position held by both Bauer and Feuerbach.

In the spring and summer of 1844, Marx plunged in for a study of French civilization, concentrating on the great revolution of 1789 and the historical literature of the "Third Estate", in which the history of France dating back to the eleventh century, is depicted in terms of class struggle. He examined also the economic structure of classes, giving special

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34. Franz Mehring, Karl Marx, quoted on p. 100.

attention to Ricardo's writings. Mention has already been made of his study of French socialism, as interpreted by Blanc, Leroux, Proudhon, and others, and of French communism as interpreted by Cabet.

In the autumn of 1844, The Holy Family was completed. In this first product of collaboration Marx and Engels were making an attempt, through their attack, to force the Young Hegelians to enter the field of social criticism. The germs of the materialist conception of history and of the theory of class struggle are evident in the arguments. We find here concepts which were to be tools for later use. In this work, however, the authors had not completely shaken loose from the humanism of Feuerbach.

The Prussian government preferred charges against Marx and in 1845 he was banished from Paris as a dangerous revolutionary. His exile in Paris, lasting a little over a year, had been intellectually exhilarating, and filled with rich experiences and relationships. Marx's next home was Brussels. As the result of nearly a year's work, Marx and Engels were prepared to publish a two-volume study, under the title of German Ideology. The manuscript was sent to a publisher who never printed the book, for practical reasons. In German Ideology, the authors endeavored to contrast their views with German Idealism. Distinction is made between the positions of idealism, materialism and dialectical materialism.

It is important to remember that all through this period

Marx was not himself a member of the proletarian class, but a bourgeois observer of the social situation. During the time of his exile in France most of his energy was devoted to a study of socialism; thereafter, increasingly more time was to be concentrated on the study of the proletariat.

Marx, with his family, went to Brussels, fearful that the Prussian government would make trouble for him there also. In this he was not to be disappointed. Upon his arrival in Brussels he was requested by the government to sign a written statement to the effect that he would print nothing concerning current Belgium political affairs. But the Prussian government continued to demand that the Belgian government expell him. Therefore, on December 1, 1945, Marx relinquished his Prussian citizenship without ever accepting citizenship in any other country, even refusing the offer of citizenship extended him by France in the Spring of 1848. It was in 1845 that Engels published his important work, The Condition of the Working Class in England. The book displayed a thorough understanding of Hegelian dialectic and consequently was significant as a contribution to the development of socialism. Further, the plight of the workers resulting from the industrial system in England was graphically described. In the Spring of 1845 Engels joined Marx in Brussels and together they went to England to study conditions for a period of six weeks. Through Engels, Marx met Chartists and socialists.

In the Spring of 1847 Marx and Engels joined the Communist

League, formerly the Federation of the Just, a secret propaganda organization. When the League held its second congress in London, November 1847, they were important figures and, by request of the League, they wrote the famous Manifesto of the Communist Party, which was published in February, 1848. Also in 1847, while still in Brussels, Marx published his book, The Poverty of Philosophy as a reply to Proudhon's The Philosophy of Poverty, which has already been considered. In this work, we meet historical materialism developed as a well-defined position. Mehring records Engel's report in the following passage:

> Engels describes how, when he went to Brussels in the spring of 1845, Marx placed the basic idea of historical materialism before him in its finally developed form: namely, that economic production in each historical period, and the social structure necessarily following from it, formed the basis for the political and intellectual history of the period; that in consequence the whole of history had been a history of class struggles, struggles between the exploited and the exploiters and between the ruled and ruling classes at various stages of social development; and that these struggles had now reached a stage at which the exploited and oppressed class, the proletariat, could no longer free itself from the exploiting and oppressing class, the bourgeiosie, without at the same time freeing the whole of society from exploitation and oppression forever.[35]

In this book, Marx seems to have succeeded in breaking free of Feuerbach and picking up Hegelian thought where it had been discarded by the orthodox Hegelians. We have in The Poverty of Philosophy a sketch of views which reappear in the

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35. Franz Mehring, Karl Marx, p. 148.

Communist Manifesto in more polished form. While the former was not a popular book, the latter was a clarion call to action which was translated into most of the tongues of Western Europe and shocked the continent. Rühle describes the content of the Communist Manifesto in the passage which follows:

> With a vividness and liveliness such as Marx had never achieved before and was never to achieve again, the manifesto describes the historical evolution of class society down to the rise of modern capitalism, down to the appearance of the bourgeoisie and the modern industrial proletariat.[36]

The Communist Manifesto may be described as the proletarian charter of action.

After three years, again the long arm of the Prussian government was raised against Marx and, when the Revolution broke out in February, 1848, Marx was banished from Belgium. He returned to Paris and from there, after the March Revolution to Cologne, in Germany. The revolutionary struggle in Germany stirred Marx profoundly and with Wilhelm Wolff, and Ferdinand Feiligrath, the revolutionary poet, he started the Neue Rheinische Zeitung. This journal, unfettered by the business policy of the first journal, was supported by proletarian and democratic movements in many countries of the world. Marx was expelled from Prussia on May 16, 1849, by the victorious counterrevolutionary forces. Again he went to Paris. Following the demonstration of June 13, 1849, Marx was ordered to leave

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[36] Otto Ruhle, Karl Marx, p. 130.

France. He went now to London, arriving toward the end of June, 1849, and there he lived until his death. Spargo indicates the significance of this move to London:

> His removal to London was one of the crucial events in the life of Marx. It became possible for him, in the classic land of capitalism, to pursue his economic studies in a way that was not possible anywhere else in the world.[37]

It is probably true that Marx would have retained his interest in economics and politics even if he had not settled in London, but it can hardly be doubted that residing in London meant the intensification of his interest and probably the determination of the character of his subsequent writings. Indeed exile in London was really the beginning of a long period of study for Marx. For many years, day after day, he worked from morning till night in the British Museum Reading Room.

Exile in London was the beginning of real suffering for the Marx family. The sale of Marx's small plot of land in Treves brought only a negligible sum of money with which to provide for the family during the first months of arrival in London. Convinced that the revolution was not permanently defeated, Marx was desirous of continuing his services to the revolutionary cause as a writer. A radical magazine was needed as an incentive to the smouldering revolution and Marx wanted to found such a periodical. His plan was to edit a magazine which would be printed in Hamburg and distributed

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[37] John Spargo, Socialism, p. 209.

from there. Like the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, the Neue Rheinische Revue failed for lack of money and materials.

Discovery of gold in California convinced Marx that the revolution which he had expected to break out in France and extend to Germany was not now certain, for a revival of trade would dispel the commercial crisis which had provided the objective conditions necessary to the beginning of the 1848 revolution. In the second of the four issues of the Revue, Marx hinted at his view. By the summer of 1850, he was convinced that the revolution could not be expected in a period of bourgeois prosperity. But some of the members of the Communist League were displeased with the sudden shift in Marx's position and this led to a split in the League and Marx withdrew, leaving Bauer and others to continue their efforts at fomenting revolution.

In 1852 Marx wrote The Class Struggle in France. This work represented his first effort "to explain a section of history, by means of the materislist method of interpretation, as the expression of the extant economic situation." He traced the detailed history of the class struggle which began in France in 1848 and came to a temporary end in 1850. In the same year Marx published The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. In this work he reached conclusions which form the classical theoretical analysis of the bourgeois revolution, and the rôle filled by lower middle class and proletariat in relation to the revolution. The Critique of Political Economy

was published in 1859 and was intended as a preface or introduction to Das Kapital.

In 1862, the international exhibition was held in London. To this exhibition came a large number of the working class. Naturally, interest was expressed in the condition of the trade union movement in the various countries. A meeting of trade union delegates was held in St. James Hall, at which time it was agreed that there should be another meeting. Accordingly, on September 28, 1864, a meeting was held at St. Martin's Hall. At this time decision was reached to found an International Workingmen's Association, with General Council located in London to represent the workers' societies in Germany, Italy, France, and England. It was further agreed that a general working-class congress should be assembled in 1865 in Belgium. Karl Marx was invited to deliver the Inaugural Address, which took the form of a program for the organization and was akin in spirit to the Communist Manifesto. Henceforth the International counted on Marx for intellectual leadership.

In July 1870, the Franco-German war began. Marx took the position that from Germany's point of view it was a defensive war and that the German workers should not permit the war to change its character. To the French workers Marx's word was to use the war as an opportunity to increase their republican liberties and to strengthen the workers' societies. They were encouraged to restrain the efforts of the bourgeoisie to rise. The Commune was proclaimed on March 18, 1871, and the French

workers led by the proletariat of Paris fought the bourgeoisie boldly as far as Versailles. The Paris Commune took over the general direction of the revolution and for a time things went well. But the Commune was inexperienced, it was uncertain in aim, division arose within the organization, and it weakened. The Versailles bourgeoisie regained control in May 1871 and celebrated with a great slaughter of the defenders of the Commune. Marx presented to the General Council of the International the draft of an address entitled "The Civil War in France," in which the Paris Commune is vigorously acclaimed for the röle it played and the bourgeiosie denounced. Rühle suggests that the Commune dramatized three lessons. He writes:

> First, of all it showed that the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie must not be confined to the economic or industrial field, but must take an economic form as well. Secondly, it showed that in bourgeois national States this struggle could only be carried on upon the platform of bourgeois politics, in parliament, the entry to which must be secured by electoral campaigns. Thirdly, it showed that the main evidence of the political struggle had been transferred from France to Germany, where the working class was rapidly acquiring political impetus.[38]

These lessons Marx seems to have assimilated to his social theory.

In 1867, the first volume of Das Kapital appeared, representing the flowering of Marx's literary effort. It set forth his analysis of the capitalist system of production, which is the basis of the Marxian economics.

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38. Otto Ruhle, op. cit., p. 299.

In 1860 Engel's father had died and he had become partner in a business which he disliked very much. It is not surprising, therefore, that he sold his partnership in 1869, and for a handsome sum. During the next thirteen years Marx and Engels were associated in literary activity, Marx developing theories and Engels contributing the practical materials. In the form of a letter to Bracke, May 15, 1875, Marx offered a *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, in which he discussed the economic basis of the withering away of the state, the relationship of state and society, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Engels published *Anti-Dühring*, his most significant work, in 1877, first as a series of articles in the Leipzig *Vorwärts*. On March 14, 1883, Karl Marx died, leaving behind notes of two uncompleted volumes of *Das Kapital*. These Engels inherited, and in 1885 volume two of *Das Kapital* made its appearance. The following year Engels published *Feuerbach*, and then there was a long interval. In 1894, one year before he died, Engels was able to present the third volume of *Das Kapital* to a public almost weary of waiting for it.

The closing statement among these biographical notes has been reserved for a word about the fate of Marx as a refugee in London. Almost from the beginning of his banishment in London his days were laden with dire poverty, family sickness, and dejection. Two of his children died, without ever having proper food or medical attention. In spite of all the financial assistance rendered by Engels and other friends, bills

from the shopkeepers, the butcher, the baker, etc. piled up. Marx was frequently reduced to pawning household goods, and selling books from his library, for what price he could get. It would seem that Marx's plight was sealed when in 1861 Prince William of Prussia, the new emperor, rejected applications for naturalization papers presented on Marx's behalf by Lassall. Although the Prince had declared an amnesty for the refugees of 1848-1849, it was extended only to those who pledged support of the royalist party. This denial condemned Marx, in effect, to economic insecurity and incessant poverty. The letters to friends for financial help, and particularly to Engels, bulk large. Sometimes he applies the name "dog" to those to whom he owes debts and he is salty about his misery and the plight of his family. When one remembers that Marx had a generous share of pride, he can well imagine that his suffering was thereby more acute.

In 1851, when Marx was sorely in need of employment and preferred journalistic work, he received an offer to write for the New York Tribune, relayed from Dana, the managing editor, through Freiligrath. Marx and Freiligrath had met in Cologne, in 1848. They agreed that twice a week Marx should forward an article to New York, at the rate of two pounds for each one. But Dana was untrustworthy; sometimes the articles were published as editorials or anonymously and Marx received no pay. Sometimes the articles were not published nor was Marx compensated. For ten years, 1852-1862, Marx depended largely

upon this precarious income. Throughout the whole period of his greatest literary productiveness, he was plagued by chronic poverty.

As we have seen, in the early phase of his career, Marx was a bourgeois observer of the social scene. In the late forties he engaged as a representative of the bourgeoisie in revolutionary propaganda and activity on behalf of the working class. But the experience of relying upon the earnings of his pen as a journalist and writer of articles converted Marx from the ranks of the bourgeoisie into the ranks of the proletariat. Slowly he became a proletarian working for the emancipation of the proletariat. In the later phase of his career he was the undisputed philosopher and intellectual genius of the proletarian revolutionary movement.

We are prepared now to turn to a systematic statement of the application of the dialectic to history and society.

Dialectics of Society

Legacy from Darwin. Charles Darwin (1809-1883) was a contemporary of Marx and Engels. In a letter to Lassall in 1861, Marx wrote in reference to the Origin of Species:

> Darwin's book is very important and serves me as a basis in natural science for the class struggle in history. One has to put up with the crude English method of development, of course. Despite all deficiencies, not only is the death-blow dealt here for the first time to "teleology" in the natural sciences but their rational meaning is

empirically explained.[39]

In his funeral oration, Engels remembers to say that "just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history." Darwin pointed out the law of the jungle, the law of the survival of the fittest in the struggle for the means of subsistence; the fittest of the species are the most adaptable, those who do in fact survive.[40] Marx took the position that within human society the racial struggle is superceded by a class struggle, which can be abolished if the dialectic law of the evolutionary process is understood.[41]

Dialectical materialism and history. According to Marxian thought, dialectical materialism, historically speaking, was the first world outlook to take human practical activity and the so-called external world as its subject matter. Thus from it proceeds the science of history, historical materialism, often called the materialist conception of history. Classical historians have refused to treat history in terms of dialectical materialism and have therefore been unprepared to

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39. Dona Torr, ed., The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, p. 125 (see p. 126 for a similar letter written to Engels in 1860).

40. The negative feature of the legacy from Darwin will be dealt with in Chapter III.

41. Herbert Spencer also applied Darwin's jungle principle of natural selection to society. But one senses a moral judgment in his application. The "fittest" survive and they are the ones who ought to survive. It is worth noting here also that Kropotkin showed that there is mutual aid and coöperation within the species as well as struggle between them.

predict the general tendency of world events. Utopian socialism also refused to treat history as a science. Consequently, even though it condemned the evils of capitalism and sketched beautiful pictures of a better society, it was unable to explain these evils or to see the proletariat as the force that would rebuild society. Insisting on a genuine existing class struggle, Marxism arose in history in opposition to Utopian Socialism. The Communist Manifesto explains:

> The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.
>
> They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from an historical movement going on under our very eyes.[42]

Thorough-going Marxism has developed, historically, in opposition to evolutionary (or gradualistic) socialism which stems from a "revised" Marxism, in which the theory of class conflict and the need for revolutionary action have been deleted. Genuine Marxism resents and rejects any attempt to mask the real struggles in society which it considers the very genius of the development of society. In the words of The Communist Manifesto:

> The history of all hitherto existing society (that is, written history) is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guildmaster and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted,

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[42] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto, p. 23. Authorized English translation.

> now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstruction of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.[43]

After this glance at dialectical materialism and history we may now turn to a closer look at the materialist conception of history.

. The materialist conception of history. As has been shown already, Marx concerned himself first with a search for general laws of historical development. Thus, if we apply the dialectical method to society, if we make this society in process of development our object of consideration, then we immediately look for its "inner contradictory tendencies and sides." Throughout this process there is a cause-and-effect relationship, so that each phase of history in a given society necessarily contains the principal elements from which the succeeding phase will emerge. The following passage makes clear Marx's interpretation of the laws of social movement:

> Marx treats the social movement as a process of natural history, governed by laws not only independent of human will, consciousness and intelligence, but rather, on the contrary, determining that will, consciousness and intelligence.... If in the history of civilization the conscious element plays a part so subordinate, then it is self-evident that a critical inquiry whose subject-matter is civilization, can, less than anything else, have for its basis any form of, or any result of, consciousness. That is to say that not the idea, but the material phenomenon alone can serve as its starting-point. Such an inquiry will confine itself to the confrontation and the comparison of a fact, not with the ideas, but with another fact.[44]

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43. Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto, English trans., p. 9.
44. Karl Marx, Capital (Modern Library), Marx's Preface to the Second Edition, p. 23.

So for the founders of Marxism, the moving cause of development is not in contradictions in concepts as taught by Hegel, but in the contradictions existing in the material world itself.

If it were not for the fact that rival classes have changed in the development of society and, the further fact, that classes are not to be attributed to either primitive or communist society, one might be tempted to describe the fundamental contradiction in the evolution of society in terms of the class struggle itself. But we are compelled to look deeper for the source of class struggle. The answer is provided in the passage which follows:

> And thus I hope even British respectability will not be overshocked if I use, in English, as well as in so many other languages, the term "historical materialism" to designate that view of the course of history, which seeks the ultimate cause of history and the moving power of all important historical events in the economic development of society, in the changes in the modes of production and exchange, in the consequent division of society into distinct classes; and in the struggles of these classes against one another.[45]

Engels states this same principle in other words:

> The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view the final causes of all social

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45. Frederick Engels, On Historical Materialism, p. 13.

> changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange.[46]

These references reveal that Marx found the basis of the class struggle to be in a contradiction between the methods of production (the "material productive forces") and the existing social relationships (the "relations of production"). This contradiction gets expressed in an external antagonism of classes during a given historical period. Historical development, therefore, springs from the interaction of men with the material conditions in which they live. This interaction produces of necessity a compatible form of social organization through which the processes of production, distribution, exchange, and consumption can operate. The structure of social organization becomes the foundation upon which arises in turn the whole complicated fabric of human relationships, the institutions of civilized society—legal, political, ethical, and cultural.

The class struggle. Marx contends that the processes of wealth production are in a state of constant alteration as improved methods of technology are invented and applied. Herein lies the basis of antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Engels writes:

> On the one hand, perfecting of machinery, made by competition compulsory for each individual manufacturer, and complemented by a constantly growing

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[46] Frederick Engels, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, p. 26.

> displacement of laborers. Industrial reserve army. On the other hand, unlimited extension of production, also compulsory under competition, for every manufacturer. On both sides, unheard of development of productive forces, excess of supply over demand, overproduction, glutting of the markets, crises every ten years, the vicious circle: excess here, of means of production and products; excess there, of laborers, without employment and without means of existence. But these two levers of production and of social well-being are unable to work together because the capitalist form of production prevents the productive forces from working, and the products from circulating, unless they are first turned into capital—which their very super-abundance prevents. The contradiction has grown into an absurdity. The mode of production rises in rebellion against the form of exchange.[47]

Economic classes are organized on the basis of their participation in wealth production, whether as master or slave in early times, or as owner, investor, or wage earner in modern times. Each group arises naturally as a result of the common status and unity of interests among its members. What began as an economic class, however, becomes ere long a political force. Marx holds that the central fact in history has been that the dominant economic class has brought the political state under its control, realizing that only by this means could its economic power be made secure. Thus while the increasing perfection of the modes of production imply correspondingly new social relationship, the actual fact is that, instead of improving, the old social relationships tend to deteriorate.

Marx gave concreteness to the existing class struggle

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[47] Engels, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, p. 46.

through an analysis of capitalism. By means of this analysis he aimed to place a foundation under his social theory. His investigation of the mechanism of capitalist production led him to the acceptance of two principal theories, the labor theory of value and the theory of surplus value.

The labor theory of value. It is interesting to note that Tawney says that "The true descendant of the doctrines of Aquinas is the labor theory of value. The last of the Schoolmen was Karl Marx."[48] The labor theory, it was stated above, was refined by Ricardo. According to him, "Labor is the real measure of the exchangeable value of any commodity." If goods differ in value, the difference is due to difference in the amounts of labor required to produce them. Marx read the English political economists and adopted from Ricardo the labor theory of value. He recognized the existence of use value (the power of a product to satisfy a human want) but is concerned about exchange value (the power of a product to be given in exchange upon the market for other commodities, or for money). Marx contends that in order that commodities may be exchanged, they must have some element in common. It is this common element which must be used in explaining and measuring their value. Commodities, being the product of labor, have a common element in the form of human labor power which has been expended in their production. It is labor,

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[48] R. H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, p. 36.

then, which is the common element, the element which creates and measures exchange value.

As far as this survey is concerned a short quotation is sufficient coverage of the Marxist view of price. Marx writes:

> What do we mean by saying that the prices of the commodities are determined by wages? Wages being but a name for the price of labour, we mean that the prices of commodities are regulated by the price of labour. As "price" is exchangeable value—and in speaking of value I speak always of exchangeable value—is exchangeable value expressed in money, the proposition comes to this, "that the value of commodities is determined by the value of labour," or that "the value of labour is the general measure of value." [49]

Marx does not accept useless, lazy labor as the standard. Recognizing that labor differs in quality, and that the value of a commodity is not always strictly proportioned to the labor actually embodied in it, Marx qualified the term labor, and regarded the amount of labor socially necessary, or the labor-time socially necessary for the production of any article as the factor which determined the magnitude of its value. "Socially necessary labor" is defined as "the quantity of labor necessary for its production in a given state of society, under certain social average conditions of production, with a given social intensity, and average skill of labor employed."[50] Therefore, in the Marxist system skilled labor is reduced to terms of unskilled labor, but Marx argued that this is not a

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[49] Karl Marx, Value, Price and Profit, E. M. Aveling, ed., p. 28.

[50] Ibid., p. 33.

difficult task, since skilled labor counts only as simple labor intensified or multiplied.

In his explanation of value Marx includes mental as well as physical labor. He also indicates that labor is not the only source of material wealth.[51] While labor does not create all wealth, it alone creates exchange wealth.

The theory of surplus value. The doctrine of surplus value and exploitation is built upon the theory of value. Concerning the doctrine, Spargo writes:

> Nor did Marx claim to be the first to distinguish surplus value. That had been done very clearly by many others, including Adam Smith. What is original in Marx is the explanation of the manner in which surplus value is produced.[52]

Marx seems to have elaborated ideas which had been advanced earlier and reshapes them into what to some, at any rate, seems a more adequate explanation of the capitalist process. Ricardo had said that wages tended to be just sufficient to provide for subsistence and reproduction on a given customary standard of life. The conclusion is that labor had created sufficient value for a decent standard of living, but in return labor had received only a subsistence level. Malthus had contended that every society, including the progressive ones, is overpopulated. Whereas population can increase in geometrical progression, the means of subsistence tend to

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[51] Marx, Capital, Modern Library, I, 50.

[52] Spargo, Socialism, p. 206.

increase only in arithmetical progression. Malthus recommended positive and preventive checks to correct the imbalance between population and the means of subsistence, but he is essentially a pessimist, prophesying increasing misery.

Briefly stated, surplus value arises through the ownership of the means of production by the capitalists who hire men to work for them, paying in return a wage less than the exchange value of the products which the workers create. The workers credit not only the value of their own subsistence but also a value which is the source of profits—surplus value. The difference between the values labor creates and the wages labor receives is extracted from labor by capitalists and distributed among the capitalist class in rent, interest, and directors' fees.

Production requires capital. Capital used for production is divided by Marx into constant and variable capital. Constant capital is that part of the capital that is invested in the means of production—building, machinery, material, etc.—which produces as such no surplus value. Variable capital is capital invested in the purchase of labor power, in hiring workmen. It is the latter portion of capital which is productive of surplus value.

In the case of surplus value, as with the theory of value, Marx holds that mere selling and buying (exchange) does not yield surplus value. The process may be easily described. Labor-power is a commodity and is bought and sold like any

other commodity. The proletarian is a free man who has to eat. If he does not sell his labor-power on the market as a commodity, he has the alternative of starving. Since labor-power attaches to a man as a quality and cannot be detached from him, or utilized apart from him, the man as a whole, having sold his labor-power, comes under the control of the capitalist. He is then not a person, but only a unit in the productive process. The value of his labor-power is fixed by the same laws that determine the value of any other commodity, that is, by the amount of socially necessary labor required to produce it. The laborer receives a wage sufficient only to support himself and family. For example, by laboring five hours (necessary labor) he can produce commodities equal in value to the wage he receives, but the employer has purchased his labor-power for ten hours. Therefore, the employer receives the product of ten hours of labor and returns to the worker as wages the value of that part of the product which has been created in five hours. The difference between these amounts, or the product of five hours of labor, the capitalist keeps for himself. Thus surplus value has come into existence. Capital has attained its end.

The relationship between exchange value and surplus value should be noted. By creating exchange value, labor also creates surplus value for the capitalist which he appropriates from the products of the workers in the form of rent, interest, and profit.

Now the amount of surplus value which the capitalist may appropriate can be increased by the extension of the working-day (absolute surplus value), or by the curtailment of necessary labor time (relative surplus value), which curtailment can be effected by the increased productiveness of the laborer, or by the relatively decreased cost of the laborer's subsistence. The capitalist naturally wants to raise the amount of surplus value, and the worker just as naturally wants to lower it. The class struggle between the capitalists and the laborers which ensues is the inevitable result of the exploitation of the laborers by the capitalist.[53] All of this should simply be accepted as characteristic of the process that is capitalism, which, in turn, is a necessary transition stage. One realizes, of course, that the fact that Marx does not confront capitalism with the ethical question does not negate its profound relevance. Marx does not argue that surplus value ought not to be taken by the capitalists. We have here a refusal to pass an ethical judgment on a process which is considered thoroughly natural. But Marx was not cornered by the capitalist process, for in his own opinion capitalism contained within it the seed of its own destruction. The capitalists cannot spend

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53. Schumpeter thinks that Marx does not wrestle adequately with the question of "primitive" accumulation, that is to say, how the capitalists came to be capitalists in the first instance or how they acquired that stock of goods which, according to the Marxian doctrine, was necessary in order to enable them to start exploiting. Joseph A. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, p. 16.

all their appropriated surplus value, and so they engage in a feverish battle for fresh markets. They fail in their efforts because of the limited purchasing power of the masses and, therefore, crises become more frequent and more disastrous. The misery of the proletariat becomes more intolerable as wealth and power are concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. The paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty reveals the irrational character of the capitalist system and, eventually, the sheer absurdity of the situation and the increasing misery of the proletariat combine to set off the explosion which is the Communist revolution. The expropriators are expropriated.

Summarily speaking, Marx sets out to find an explanation for the existence of capitalism. He located the pivot of capitalism in the doctrine of surplus value. Surplus value is for him the source of capitalist income; it is the exploitation of the workers through the appropriation of a portion of their products by the employing or capitalist class. The doctrine of surplus value itself rests on the theory that all exchange value is created by labor. Behind the class conflict is economic exploitation, and in the process of exploitation two classes are revealed, the capitalist class and the working class, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is the latter class that we propose to investigate further. And the first question of interest is, Who are the proletariat?

a. The Constituent Characteristic of the Proletarian Class

The theory of the proletariat as a class must be understood against the background of the fact that Marx was faced by another class—the capitalists. In his *Holy Family*, written in 1844, Marx used the Hegelian dialectic in describing the class struggle. There is the positive, private property, Marx argues, and the negative or antithesis, the proletariat. As a consequence of the conflict between the emerging proletariat, the antithesis, and private property, the thesis, we might expect the appearance of a new form of society, a synthesis, under which both private property and the proletariat pass away. *The Communist Manifesto* opens with the well-known statement, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle." The element of antagonism is stressed in the following passage from *The Poverty of Philosophy*:

> Things happen in quite a different way from what M. Proudhon imagines. The very moment civilization begins, production begins to be founded on the antagonism or orders, estates, classes, and finally on the antagonism of accumulated labor and actual labor. No antagonism, no progress. This is the law which civilization has followed up to our days. Til now the productive forces have been developed by virtue of this system of class antagonism.[54]

In a passage from *The Communist Manifesto* we see the relationship between the rise of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie:

> In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed—a class

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[54] Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, p. 53.

> of laborers, who live only as long as they find work, and who find work only as their labor increases capital. These laborers, who must sell themselves piece-meal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.[55]

From The German Ideology comes a quotation which points out how the means of production function as the determinate class:

> The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the actual means they find in existence and have to reproduce. This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production.[56]

A passage is now offered which catches up some of the elements in the above quotations and also points towards the question which must be raised next:

> The bourgeoisie begins with a proletariat which is a relic of the proletariat of feudal times. In the course of its historical development, the bourgeoisie necessarily develops its antagonistic character, which at first is more or less disguised, existing only in a latent state. As the bourgeoisie develops, there develops in its bosom a new proletariat, a modern proletariat; there develops a struggle between the proletarian class and the bourgios

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[55] Karl Marx and F. Engels, The Communist Manifesto, p. 15. See also Capital, Modern Library, pp. 203-206, for Marx's description of the labor process which justifies his designation of the laborer as a commodity.

[56] Marx, The German Ideology, p. 7.

> class, a struggle which, before being felt, perceived, appreciated, understood, avowed and proclaimed aloud by the two sides, expresses itself, to start with, merely in partial and momentary conflict, in subversive acts. On the other hand, if all the members of the modern bourgeoisie have the same interests inasmuch as they form a class as against another class, they have opposite, antagonistic interests inasmuch as they stand face to face with one another. This opposition of interests results from the economic conditions of their bourgeois life. From day to day it thus becomes clearer that the production relations in which the bourgeoisie moves have not a simple, uniform character, but a dual character; that in the self-same relations in which there is a development of the productive forces, there is also a driving force of repression; that these relations produce bourgeois wealth, i.e., the wealth of the bourgeois class, only by continually annihilating the wealth of the individual members of this class and by producing an ever-growing proletariat.[57]

A review of the above quotations suggests three summary statements. In the first place, Marx does not offer us a clear-cut definition of "class". In Capital he deals with three classes, capitalists, proletariat, and landlords. It is clear, however, that Marx is not interested in classes in a generic sense, but that he is interested in social classes, those social classes which are determined by the relation of different groups of men to the production process, i.e., economic classes. Accordingly, there are only two major classes. While Marx does not deny the existence and need of farmers, clerks, professionals, and others, he simply does not recognize them as rating major categories. Even if we included

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[57] Karl Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy, p. 104.

these groups, the central mass of the proletariat would still consist of those whom we ordinarily call working men. The proletariat appears as that class in society, which, lacking the means of production, must, for its livelihood, sell its labor power as a commodity on the market to those who do possess the means of production. By contractural arrangement the workers enter into certain obligations which put them at the behest of the employers, and which have implications for the totality of their lives. "Employability at a wage" is, then, the distinguishing characteristic of the proletariat. While recognizing that "class" in Marx's system is not a precise concept, Schumpeter writes:

> The basic idea is clear enough. The stratefying principle consists in ownership, or exclusion from ownership of means of production such as factory buildings, machinery, raw materials and the consumer's goods that enter into the workmen's budget.[58]

We have a description of the proletariat which provides us at least a valid working definition.

Secondly, the modern proletariat are the product of capitalism, with its peculiar production process.

Thirdly, the theories of class struggle, historical materialism, and surplus value are all organically involved in the rise of the proletariat.

The question already suggested above is whether class-consciousness is, in the thought of Marx, necessary to the

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[58] Joseph A. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, p. 15.

existence of classes. Can there be a non-class-conscious class?

If the proletariat is a self-conscious class, it is so in relation to the economic factor. The distinguishing characteristic of the capitalist system has already been discussed. Production is a social operation carried on by men organized and working together in factories; but the product is privately appropriated. Social production ends in capitalist appropriation, and this is the contradiction which spans the history of capitalism. Here is located the germ of all the antagonism and confusion which thrives within the capitalist system. As the Manifesto states it,

> For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeoisie and of its rule.[59]

From The Poverty of Philosophy comes an enlargement of the view of the passage just cited:

> Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of the people into workers. The domination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle, of which we have noted only a few phases, this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends become class interests. But the struggle of class against class is a political struggle.[60]

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[59] Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto, p. 14.

[60] Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy, p. 145.

The following citation stresses the rôle of the development of industry in the conscious growth of the proletariat:

> But with the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalized, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labor and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crisis, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between classes. Thereupon the workers begin to form combinations (trade unions) against the bourgeoisie; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provisions beforehand for these occasional revolts.[61]

It seems clear by now that class itself is for Marx an economic phenomenon, but that the conception of class is social. The fact of class is established in view of men's relation to the means of production. Class-consciousness seems to be a thing that is achieved. The antagonism which is in the texture of capitalism may be considered a factor contributing in some small degree to class consciousness. This would hardly be more than a passive acceptance of the implications of a common status. The mass is welded together in a self-conscious class, so Marx suggests, by struggle, a struggle born of an awareness of class interests and the historic rôle

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61. Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto, pp. 17-18; see also Karl Marx, The Class Struggles in France, p. 43.

of the class on the one hand, and a struggle precipitated, on the other hand, by the development of the industrial bourgeoisie (the objective condition). But real struggle presupposes self-consciousness, does it not? In this connection, Cole[62] makes a distinction between class loyalty and class solidarity, and suggests that a class can be a force for social change motivated by a sense of loyalty as well as by a clear sense of solidarity (sense of solidarity being understood to refer to class-consciousness). If a rational idea is implanted, the sense of loyalty in the class is strengthened, and classes fulfill important rôles in social change also when they accept the leadership of a minority which is rationally self-conscious. Now the converting of class loyalty, which can be a kind of unreflective acceptance of a given social status, into the sense of class solidarity is largely the function of propaganda and organization, which can be best carried out through a political party.

We may appropriately turn now for a look at the relationship of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie and sympathetic intellectuals. We noted above that the rise of the modern bourgeois class has given rise to the modern proletarian class. Both classes are the product of modern capitalism. Marx concluded from observations in England and France that the bourgeois revolution must precede the proletarian revolution and

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[62] G. D. H. Cole, What Marx Really Meant, p. 26f.

that the bourgeois must be helped onward to victory as a prelude to the proletarian revolution. He pointed out in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte that all elements had worked for the Revolution of February, 1848; the dynastic opposition, the republic bourgeoisie, the democratic, the democratic-republican petty bourgeoisie and the social-democratic workers, provisionally associated to promote the cause of the revolution and afterwards found a place in the government. But Marx makes plain the point that the proletarian coöperation with the bourgeoisie revolution is the only path by which the proletariat may fulfill the revolutionary destiny which history has reserved for it. As Mehring has shown,[63] Marx worked vigorously, following the founding of the Democratic League in Brussels in 1847, to advance the cause of the bourgeois revolution. The important consequence of proletarian assistance in the bourgeois revolution is that it gives the proletariat valuable experience within the law, in the use of political tools and power. In The Class Struggle in France, Marx writes:

> The development of the industrial proletariat is, in general, conditioned by the development of the industrial bourgeoisie. Only under its rule the proletariat wins the extensive national existence, which can raise its revolution to a national one and itself create the modern means of production, which become just so many means of the revolutionary emancipation.[64]

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[63] Franz Mehring, Karl Marx, see Chapter VI.

[64] Marx, The Class Struggle in France, p. 43.

In the critical days of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, some of the petty bourgeoisie may be expected to associate themselves with the proletariat, concluding that they can expect no important benefits from the bourgeoisie. This was a lesson taught by the revolution of 1848 in France. Some intellectuals also may be expected to join with the proletariat as expressed in the Manifesto:

> Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.[65]

It should be emphasized that the association of other groups with the proletariat does not change its characteristic constituency nor does it divert it from its historic mission. This review of the component parts of the proletarian class places us in a position to inquire into the function of this class, to which task we turn now.

b. The Function of the Proletariat

What is the function of the proletariat in the pre-revolutionary period? Marx's own activities may be suggestive of

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[65] Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto, p. 19; see also p. 17.

his attitude toward what the proletariat should be doing in the period before the revolution. He and Engels associated themselves at various times with workers' organizations: Workers' Brotherhood in Germany, Workers' Educational Society of Brussels, Workers' Educational Society of London, and, The International Workingmen's Association. These organizations were representative of a wide range of activities for the protection of the workers' economic interests. Before the end of the nineteenth century, the trade unions, accepting the theory of Marx, had begun to enter the field of politics. Socialists and Social-Democratic Parties were founded in Germany, France, Italy, Austria, and Russia. In England the Labor Party represented a similar organization, but rejected the theory of Marx. During the forties Marx and Engels gave active guidance and support to these numerous organizations. Even after 1850 when he had concluded that the revolution was indefinitely postponed, Marx still demonstrated interest in these organizations.

What the proletariat should do in the face of the probable victory of the democratic party in Germany, thus establishing a bourgeois democratic regime, was suggested by Marx in his address to the Communist League (1850). He wrote:

> As hitherto, so in the coming struggle, the petty bourgeoisie as a whole will maintain an attitude of delay, irresolution, and inactivity, as long as possible, in order that, as soon as victory is assured, they may abrogate it to themselves and call upon the workers to remain quiet, return to work, avoid so-called excesses, and thus to shut off the workers

> from the fruits of victory. It is not in the power of the workers to prevent the petty bourgeois democrats from doing that; but it is within their power to render their ascendancy over the armed proletariat difficult, and to dictate to them such terms as shall make the rule of the bourgeois democracy carry within itself from the beginning the germ of dissolution, and its ultimate substitution by the rule of the proletariat considerably facilitated.
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> The workers, above all during the conflict and immediately afterwards, must try as much as ever possible to counteract all bourgeois attempts at appeasement, and compel the democrats to carry out their present terrorist phases.... During the fight and afterwards the workers must seize every opportunity to present their own demands beside those of the bourgeois democrats. They must demand guarantees for the workers as soon as the democrats propose to take over the reigns of government. If necessary, they must exact these guarantees, and generally see to it that the new rulers should bind themselves to every possible concession and promise, which is the surest way to compromise them. [66]

A quotation from the Manifesto furnishes a suggestion of how the proletariat operated in England in the period looking toward the revolution:

> This organization of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political part, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier. It compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers, by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself. Thus the ten-hour bill in England was carried. [67]

Marx's view of the function of the proletariat in the pre-

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66. Emile Burns, ed., Handbook of Marxism, p. 66.

67. Marx, and F. Engels, Communist Manifesto, p. 18.

revolutionary period springs, in part, from his conception of the bourgeois state. We shall discuss this conception shortly; suffice it to say here that he described the state in terms of an agency of coercion and therefore he could counsel the proletariat to press hard bargains in order to attain what it wanted from the state. He did believe it possible to bring pressure upon the bourgeois state, and by so doing to secure social legislation, particularly if the state were still developing and prosperous. Moreover, he approved the struggle for social legislation as a means of binding the proletariat into a self-conscious class, and providing it political experience. It is abundantly clear, however, that he did not conceive that any fundamental change would be affected in the structure of capitalist society by the use of such means. Another method would have to be employed if a radical change were to be achieved in the relationship of men to the production process. Here enters the Communist Party, and we may note the relationship between it and the proletariat.

It is plainly stated in the Manifesto that the Communist Party is not "a separate party opposed to other working class parties." It is rather the vanguard of the working class parties. The Communists are forcefully described in the lines that follow from the Communist Manifesto:

> The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the

> other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.
>
> The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: Formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat....
>
> In short, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.
>
> In all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each case, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.
>
> Communists scorn to hide their views and aims. They openly declare that their purposes can only be achieved by the forcible overthrow of the whole extent social order. Let the ruling class tremble at the prospect of a communist revolution. Proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.
>
> Workingmen of all countries, unite! [68]

In these paragraphs the relationship of the Communist Party to the proletarian class is adequately set forth. The Party is that section of the proletariat which, in view of its training in the class struggle, education in revolutionary theory and revolutionary courage, is best prepared to lead the proletarian class in the overthrow of the bourgeois capitalist society.

At this point we come naturally to an interest in the

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[68] Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto, p. 44.

revolution and the relationship of the proletariat to it. In order to appreciate more fully the meaning of Marx's advocacy of revolution as the means for ushering in the communist society, one has to recall the attitude he developed over the years in regard to the state. Fundamental to Marx's thinking, in this connection, is the proposition that there is no such thing as a classless state. As he viewed the contemporary state, it is both the product and the manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. It is a coercive power, existing to enforce the wishes and program of the dominant class, the bourgeoisie. It is an organ of oppression of one class by another; it stands for the power of the dominant class to resist and to punish all efforts to change radically the existing system of class relationships. Marx took no stock in those schools of social thought which defined the state in terms of political right, or obligation. Although he concedes that the state has other than class-coercive functions, he considers these of secondary importance. With this negative view of the state, Marx hardly had any choice but to propose a method to eliminate the existing state. The method was revolution. By means of the revolution the capitalist state was to be completely destroyed and a new one formed, reflecting the needs of the workers and being their instrument of dictatorship. Regarding Marx's view of the state and the action necessary to bring in the socialist order Schumpeter writes:

> His revolution is but the particular garb in which

> his imagination liked to clothe that action. The emphasis on violence is perhaps understandable in one who in his formative years had experienced all the excitement of 1848 and who was, though quite able to despise revolutionary ideology, yet never able to shake off its trammels. Moreover, the greater part of his audience would hardly have been willing to listen to a message that lacked the hallowed clarion call. Finally, though he saw the possibility of peaceful transition, at least in England, he may not have seen its likelihood.[69]

Marx's personal experience with an autocratic Prussian state should be recalled here and the influence it had in weening him away from the Hegelian notion of the state.[70]

The proletariat is the "active factor" bringing about the change from capitalism to communism. It is necessary to observe the function the proletariat performs and the circumstances under which it does so. From The Poverty of Philosophy comes instruction on these points:

> An oppressed class is the vital condition for every society founded on the antagonism of classes. The emancipation of the oppressed class thus implies necessarily the creation of a new society. For the oppressed class to be able to emancipate itself it is necessary that the productive powers already acquired and the existing social relations should no longer be capable of existing side by side. Of all the instruments of production, the greatest productive power is the revolutionary class itself.[71]

Preceding the revolution is a period of increasing misery,[72]

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[69] Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, p. 58.

[70] Hook argues that acceptance of the Marxian view of the state is what makes one a true Marxist. See p. 270.

[71] Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy, p. 146.

[72] In 1805, Charles Hall, published On the Effects of Civilization on the People in European States, and included the experience of misery in his economic thinking. Attention has been directed above to the influence of Malthus on Marx's thinking at this point.

in which the disparity between workers' volume of production and what the workers receive in wages grows. There follows an intensification of the struggle between classes, the workers being imprisoned by an outworn social structure. The workers ultimately have no choice but to break out of the prison, to break their chains. Thus we are confronted with the revolution.

The solution of the struggle between capitalists and workers lies in the proletarian revolution. Marxism teaches that capitalism not only contains the seeds of its own destruction, but it brings into being the class that will eventually accomplish its death. That class is the proletariat—the workers with hand and brain. The Communist Manifesto states:

> Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the wave of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.[73]

A rather lengthy section from Capital will serve to describe the process by which the proletarian revolution moves ahead:

> As soon as this process of transformation has sufficiently decomposed the old society from top to bottom, as soon as the labourers are turned into proletarians, their means of labour into capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet, then the further transformation of the land and other means of production into socially exploited and, therefore, common means of production, as well as the further expropriation of private proprietors, takes a new form. That

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[73] Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto, p. 19; see also Marx, The German Ideology, p. 67.

[illegible] within [illegible]

and were [illegible] necessary [illegible]

an impossibility [illegible]

[illegible] being developed by an [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

value.

[illegible] of [illegible] production of [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] into [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

> [illegible]

[illegible] from [illegible] will [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] technology [illegible]

> [illegible]

> which is now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many labourers.... One capitalist always kills many.... Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolize all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with and under it. Centralization of the means of pro duction and socialization of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated.... But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of nature, its own negation. It is the negation of negation.[74]

In Chapter 31 of Capital (Modern Library) Marx makes an explicit appeal to force as the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. It is important to remember at this point that historical materialism describes society in dynamic terms and attributes its development to its inner contradictions, arising out of the "material productive forces" and the "relations of production." It presents history as the history of the class struggle, pictures the class development of the proletariat and points out the inevitable self-annihilation of capitalist society. Concerning the specific function of the proletariat in the period of the revolutionary crisis, three observations may be made. In the first instance,

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[74] Marx, Capital (Modern Library, p. 836f; see also The Poverty of Philosophy, pp. 112 and 147.

Marx anticipated a period of increasing misery as being introductory to the revolution, in which the inherent contradiction between social production and private appropriation of profits characteristic of capitalism would be so evident as to lead to the degradation of the proletariat. Secondly, the revolution would follow the economic break-down of the capitalist system. In other words, the economic conditions necessary for a new economic system (the objective pre-condition of revolution) emerge and produce the social forces which will bring it about. Thirdly, the economic breakdown of capitalism and the accompanying social condition of misery are the clarion call to a well disciplined, numerous, organized and self-conscious proletariat to revolt and by force to destroy the bourgeois state and to lead in the day of freedom for all, thus fulfilling its historic destiny. Then will begin the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat.[75]

A further point of interest is the question of the relationship of the proletariat to the state in the period of transition from capitalism to communism. It has already been indicated that Marx did not accept the notion of a classless state. In the period of transition the state still exists, but it is a state under the control of the proletariat. The quotations that follow shed light on the point:

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[75] Schumpeter suggests that here is evidence that would place Marxism among the chiliastic creeds, p. 57. Rühle, in Karl Marx, describes this function of the proletariat as that of a demiurge, p. 11.

> Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.[76]

It is valuable to include here a series of paragraphs that describe the kind of activity which will engage the attention of the proletariat in the period of transition:

> A class in which the revolutionary interest of society are concentrated, so soon as it has risen up, finds directly in its own situation the content and the material of its revolutionary activity: foes to be laid low, measures dictated by the needs of the struggle, to be taken; the consequences of its own deeds drive it on. It takes no theoretical inquiries into its own task.[77]
>
> All the preceding classes that got the upper hand, sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriations. The proletarians cannot become master of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurance of, individual property.[78]

In Marx's exhaustive and vehement criticism of The Gotha Programme he recognized two phases of communism. The first phase is what we usually call socialism. Here some elements of capitalist society are still evident. So Marx writes:

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76. K. Marx, Critique of the Gotha Programme, p. 18; see also The Communist Manifesto, p. 30.

77. Marx, The Class Struggle in France, pp. 42-43.

78. Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto, p. 20; see also Marx, Critique of the Gotha Programme, p. 17.

> What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has developed on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges.[79]

Marx takes full account also of the fact that during the first phase of communism there will be inevitable defects and inequalities among men, for the evils of capitalist society are not overcome suddenly with the overthrow of capitalism. The bourgeois conception of "right", moral standard, has not yet been eliminated, which is justification for the continued existence of a state to enforce democracy, through its protection of the public ownership of the means of production and the rights of the workers, and the guaranteeing of equality in the distribution of products. In the second or higher phase of communism, we witness the withering away of the state, the passing of bourgeois moral standards, all classes, and consequently, all exploitation. Here true freedom prevails, for there is no more state. True, administrative duties have to be performed, but these are carried out by an organization which is totally divested of coercive power. In description of this second phase Marx writes:

> In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor, from a mere means of life, has itself

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79. Marx, Critique of the Gotha Programme, p. 8.

> become the prime necessity of life; after the productive forces have also increased with the all round development of the individual, and all the springs of coöperative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon for bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe on its banners: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.[80]

Summarily speaking, it can be said that the function of the proletariat in the period of the transition is to work for the completion of the revolution by using its power to carry out the measures of socialization and cultural education that lead to communism. The purpose of the overthrow of capitalism is to establish a socialist society, the foundation of which is to be common ownership of the means of production and their operation for the general good. Through the elimination of classes, class antagonisms will disappear. Now society will consist of workers only, and emphasis will be placed upon coöperative living and collective responsibility. Gradually the political authority of the state dies out, keeping pace with the passing of anarchy in social production. But socialist society must not be considered the final stage. The final stage in the social process is communism. In this phase there is experienced the flowering of a new ideology, an ideology which is based on and is, in part, the reflection of the new economic forces, the socialized means, modes and methods of production and distribution, and the developing popular control

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80. Marx, Critique of the Gotha Programme, p. 10; see also The Poverty of Philosophy, p. 146, and Communist Manifesto, pp. 23, 31.

over them. During the interim between the two stages the victorious workers must establish a dictatorship to inaugurate their program and to destroy counter-revolution. Various states will progress from capitalism to socialism to communism, according to their own time schedule, and in view of their own peculiar social, cultural, and economic development. Marxism calls for the unity of the workers of the world as a prerequisite for the world conquest of communism. Thus class loyalty is regarded as superior to any racial or national allegiance.

If we assume the validity of Marxian theory, what will be the function of the proletariat in the new communist society?[81] No doubt Marx was wise in withholding from us a detailed picture of the communist order. We know, however, that the Paris Commune of 1871 did serve him as a model, giving direction to much of his reflection about the new order. But there is considerable vagueness in his treatment of the Great Society. Moreover, Marx makes no attempt to predict the time of its arrival. It will come according to its own time schedule, as far as our information goes. Marx seemed to have been much

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81. Note that while he professed to accept absolutely the principles of Marx, Lenin made important revisions of them. He did not trust the revolutionary mentality of the proletariat and consequently organized a Communist Party which is not a party of the working class, but for all practical purposes, is the dictatorship for the proletariat. While Marx excluded the peasantry from a rôle in the coming revolution, Lenin included them. See Jerome Davis's treatment of six new principles which Lenin added to Marxism in Contemporary Social Movements, pp. 261-265.

more concerned about pointing out the conditions necessary to emergence of the communist society. It is clear that he believed that the old order founded on class antagonisms must go and that the new order must be without classes and without private property. The logic of his position is obvious, the dictatorship of the proletariat which conducts the revolution to its final stage, will by so doing guarantee its own annihilation. A leveling of classes will characterize the new society, and the proletariat as a class will no longer have a function. In a classless, stateless society there will be true freedom for all.

c. The Proletariat as Idea

Up to this point we have been discussing the proletariat as a class. But the proletariat also represents an idea which Marx found useful. We need now to inquire into the use he made of the proletariat as idea. In his doctoral thesis Marx was critical of Democritus because he was the exponent of a hypothesis which, while representing the result of experience had no power to affect the practical investigation of natural phenomena. Epicurus rated commendation from Marx because he offered an "energizing principle" by means of which he himself had revolted against and won freedom from an oppressive religion. Another indication of Marx's frame of mind is revealed in a word from his Thesis on Feuerbach. "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point,

however, is to change it." Marx's insistence upon finding a view of life characterized by change has been discussed earlier in this study. "As far as Marx was concerned," says Mehring, "Living always meant working, and working, fighting." His was a life of action which required a rationale and it was necessary likewise for those for whom he worked to have a theoretical basis for their action also. Concerning ideas, Marx writes in The German Ideology:

> The production of ideas, concepts of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of actual life. Conception, thought, the mental intercourse of men, then, still appear as the direct efflux of their material relations.[82]

Emphasizing the relation between theory and reality, Marx again writes:

> These premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be verified in a purely empirical way.[83]

In Ludwig Feuerbach, Engels found the basis in natural science for the view that ideas are a material force with interconnections. Two paragraphs follow from The Holy Family:

> Speaking generally, mass is an indefinite object, which therefore cannot perform a definite action, and cannot enter into a definite relation. Mass, as object of critical criticism, has nothing in common

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82. Emile Burns, ed., A Handbook on Marxism, p. 212.

83. Marx, The German Ideology, p. 7.

> with real masses, which, for their part, form their massive oppositions among themselves. Their mass is "made" by itself, as if an investigator, instead of talking of definite classes, should contrast class with itself.[84]

But an idea which is radical enough will seize hold of the masses and they will move into action, as a material force in conflict with another material force.

> We are not concerned, therefore, with what this or that proletarian, or even the proletarian as a whole, may regard as an aim. What we are concerned with is, what the proletariat actually is; and what the proletariat will, in accordance with the nature of its own being, be historically compelled to do. Its goal and its historical action are obvious, are irrevocably indicated, in the vital situation of the proletariat, and also in the whole organization of contemporary bourgeois society.[85]

Here also is included the famous Gallic chanticleer passage from Marx's Introduction to a _Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right_, published in the _Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher_, in the year 1843 and quoted by Mehring in his biography of Marx:

> As philosophy finds its material weapons in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its intellectual weapons in philosophy, and as soon as the lightning of thought has struck deep into the mass of the common people, the emancipation of the Germans into human beings will take place. The emancipation of Philosophy cannot be realized without the liquidation of the proletariat, the proletariat cannot liquidate itself without realizing philosophy. When all the inner conditions have been fulfilled the day of German resurrection will be announced by the

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84. Quoted by Rühle in _Karl Marx_, p. 84.

85. _Ibid._, p. 82.

crowing of the Gallic chanticleer.[86]

If one accepts the proposition that Marx was not merely seeking to explain history but to transform it, then he is prepared to accept the conclusion that Marx had a purpose for his social theories, namely, to disseminate the kind of knowledge about social trends which would provoke the most effective steps towards the revolution. For him philosophy is orientated towards the future rather than the past. A social theory is thus to be judged by how it functions in the social situation, by what it accomplishes.

Marx and Engels found in men and things the subject matter of history, and the key to the evolutionary process. The superiority of mind over matter or vice versa is not a matter of discussion. Marxism insists upon the unity of mind and mass, theory and practice. Practice is not only involved in

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86. Quoted by Franz Mehring, Karl Marx, p. 96.
Arnold Toynby, in his thought-provoking treatment of the passing of civilizations from a breakdown to disintegration, declares that in the breakdown of civilizations an External as well as the Internal Proletariat, becomes differentiated from the Dominant Minority from which it has previously accepted leadership. Unlike the Internal Proletariat, the break-away in the case of the External Proletariat results in a schism which is not only to be defined in emotional but geographical terms also. Then Toynby writes: "In the body social of a growing civilization we may take it that the whole of the uncreative mass has been touched and stirred by the creative minority in some way or other whenever a challenge receives a successful response. For those who do not catch the inspiration in their souls, 'like a light caught from a leaping flame' are induced to conform externally by the enlistment of their faculty of mimesis." Arnold Toynby, A Study of History, V, 196.

theory, but it is also enmeshed in the thinking process itself. Ultimately, practice, as some form of activity, serves as the criterion of the worth of ideas. In the Marxian view, the principal ideas arise in connection with the economic phases of life, and are powerful social forces. In reference to this point Cole writes:

> The role of ideas in history is thus vitally important, but also secondary. For ideas have their influence, not as disembodied notions, but as the creeds of bodies of men whom they inspired to action. The idea is nothing without a thinker: the social idea is nothing unless it is embodied in a social movement. Even as there can be no mind without a body, there can be no socially influential conception without a movement to make it real.[87]

We may justifiably conclude, I think, that in the theoretical system of Marx the proletariat was an "energizing principle," an active idea, which possessed the power of translating the great unorganized, inert, masses into a disciplined, self-conscious class with a revolutionary will. Men in whom the revolutionary idea resides are forced into action to transform a restrictive and oppressing external world, but in the process they also establish conditions which lead to their own remaking.

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87. G. D. H. Cole, What Marx Really Meant, p. 94.

C. An Illustration

1. The Proletariat, as Idea, in Action

The discussion of the proletariat up to this point has included a treatment of the constituent character of the proletariat, the function of the proletariat as a class, and the function of the idea of the proletariat. To round out our thought about the proletariat, we turn now to observe what happens when the idea of the proletariat becomes the "energizing principle" of a group or movement. An adequate illustration of the point will be found in the struggle between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks in Russia, up to 1928.

Although liberalism and capitalism were gaining substantially in most of Europe, during the nineteenth century, Tsarist Russia was greatly delinquent in cultural and economic development. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the nobility still controlled most of the land, and in spite of the fact that serfdom was officially abolished in 1861, the peasants were victimized by privation and ignorance. Not even Russian autocracy was able, however, to prevent the ideas which were liberalizing western Europe from having a disturbing influence upon Russia. The calls for reform could not be permanently ignored.

We have seen that in 1844 Karl Marx's thought was taking systematic form and that in 1848 The Communist Manifesto was published as the guide of the workingmen's associations. The

power of the Manifesto was evident when, in the eighteen-seventies, the German-Socialist Democratic Party was founded, as well as the Paris Commune. Marx had taught that the workers' struggle for economic emancipation must include political action, culminating in the revolutionary transformation of society in the interest of all the people. Parkes sees here the cardinal elements of Marxism. He writes:

> These two doctrines—that the proletariat will revolutionize society, and that the proletarian revolution will mean the entrance of mankind into the kingdom of freedom—are the core of Marxism. [88]

According to the theory, as Marx taught, the proletariat, as a result of its relation to the production process, is inherently a revolutionary class.

Although Russia, in view of the teachings of Marx, would not qualify as a field of action, a Marxist group was growing there by 1883 and was to become the Socialist Democratic Party in 1898. The founder of the group was Plekhanov, who gave it able guidance for twenty years and the membership consisted mainly of intellectuals. It was at the second congress of the organization in 1903 that the party split into divisions which were to become known as Mensheviks (minority) and Bolsheviks (majority). Wasserman gives a comparison of the programs of the divisions in a brief statement:

> The Menshevik program was moderate, limiting it-

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[88] H. B. Parkes, Marxism: An Autopsy, p. 10.

> self to political objectives—abolition of the monarchy, and inauguration of a popular constitutional regime, in which it was content to function as a party of reform. The Bolsheviks, with Lenin as leader, were more sweeping in their demands, advocating the seizure of political power through mass uprising, the establishment of a worker—peasant dictatorship as a guarantee of thorough-going socialization of the land and factories.[89]

Lenin did not accept the current views about the Russian peasants, nor was he in a mood to wait for the workmen to develop a revolutionary mentality. He determined to gather about him a well trained group that would accept the revolutionary idea without question and act. This he did and he found a large number of his followers among the intellectuals. In Our Programme Lenin describes in his own words the task of the Bolsheviks:

> We base our faith entirely on Marx's theory; it was the first to transform socialism from a Utopia into science, to give this science a firm foundation and to indicate the path which must be trodden in order further to develop this science and to elaborate it in all its details.... It has made clear what is the real task of a socialist revolutionary party—not to set up projects for the transformation of society, nor to preach sermons to capitalists and their admirers about improving the position of the workers, not the instigation of conspiracies, but the organization of the class struggle of the proletariat and the carrying on of this struggle, the final aim of which is the seizure of political power by the proletariat and the organization of a socialist society.[90]

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[89] Louis Wasserman, Modern Political Philosophies and What They Mean, p. 97.

[90] V. I. Lenin, Our Programme, found in A Handbook of Marxism, Emile Burns, ed., pp. 570-71.

Under the banner of orthodox Marxism the Bolshevik ship set sail, but it is interesting to find that the Mensheviks also claimed to be true Marxists. It is well to turn back at this point and note the events leading up to the Russian revolution.

b. 1881-1917, The Fall of Tsardom

The assassination of his father made a lasting impression upon Alexander III (1881-1894), successor to the throne. The attitude of Alexander III was passed on to his son and successor, Nicholas II (1894-March 1917). The tutor to both the tsars was a reactionary, Pobedonostev, who was always in the favor of the court. He organized, with the help of a group of his friends, a secret anti-revolutionary society. The Holy Fellowship, which used the methods of the revolutionaries, including death, to defeat its opponents.

The simple political program of Alexander III consisted of opposing all liberal and revolutionary movements in Russia, and satisfying, to a certain degree, the urgent economic needs of the people. His distrust of all popular movements and firm belief in the infallibility of the principle of autocracy were inherited from Nicholas II. The murder of Alexander II stopped all reforms for twenty-three years (1881-1904).

The years from 1903-1914 are often designated the period of liberal Russia. In this connection, it must be remembered that the great reform measures of Alexander II remained on the

Statute Book, and that they had the effect of slogans of reform. In this period not even the Tsar could expect to secure any substantial modification of these laws. The intelligent and forceful activity of the Zemstva, the great famines of 1891-1893, the unpopular and unfortunate war with Japan (1904-1905), all contributed to the rise of a mass effort which came to a climax in a national program, produced under the leadership of the Moscow Zemstvo, of which the whole keynote was liberty (of persons, conscience, speech, press, meeting, association) and the demand for representative assembly. Nicholas II, after an attempt to reassert his autocratic authority, yielded to the general demand for an assembly. The franchise practically became universal; the Duma (the new parliament) became legislative and a Cabinet was set up (for the first time) with a Prime Minister. The new political arrangements indicate no change of heart on the part of Nicholas II; he was, probably, until his death an autocrat. Both he and the empress thought of the ministers more as the personal domestic staff of the imperial household. Important to remember also is the fact that in the reign of Tsar Nicholas, the clever and evil Rasputin was the real adviser to the imperial household. Describing the determination of the last two tsars to resist the popular liberal tide, Vernadsky writes:

> Seeking to hold the various classes under close observation, the Government searched for a group in society upon which it could itself depend. This group was the Russian nobility. During the reigns

> of Alexander III and Nicholas II, the Government attempted to secure the support of the nobility by granting it special privileges in respect to local self-government and local justice. In addition a number of financial privileges were granted to the nobility. The dependence of the internal policy upon the nobility was a fatal political error.[91]

Mention must be made of the fact that there were measures directed toward the improvement of the condition of the peasantry. In 1882 a decree was issued ordering compulsory sale to the peasants of lands on those estates where the sale had not been completed following emancipation. In 1886, installments which peasants must pay to the government for land were lowered and the head tax abolished. New regulations were passed enabling peasants to rent government lands easily and to migrate to the eastern part of the country. Capitalism in Russia was on the rise and in 1882 government inspection of factories was instituted and the government made an effort to regulate labor conditions, and to limit by law the working hours of minors and women. In 1902 some labor unions were legalized, but it was only beginning March, 1906, after the Revolution of 1905, that labor unions were permitted on a large scale. In 1903 workers' accident compensation was introduced, health and accident insurance in 1912.[92] In spite of these government measures of improvement, both Tsar Alexander III and Nicholas II employed police supervision of the people in such a way as to irritate them.

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[91] Vernadksy, A History of Russia, p. 175.
[92] Vernadsky, op. cit., pp. 176, 210f.

Came the war of 1914. At the outset the Russian people supported the war effort enthusiastically. There was an intense devotion to the national army. For the first fourteen months the Russian army, against altogether superior artillery, fought valiantly in east Prussia and before the gates of Warsaw. In the face of losses amounting to millions and diminishing supplies, the army continued to fight. But back home public opinion was aroused over the fact that the army was no better prepared or equipped for the war. A loud demand for a reform of the military bureaucracy arose. In this critical period of the war, Gregory Rasputin's evil genius was dominant in the policies of the State. Protopopov, minister of the interior, was appointed under his influence. Rasputin's hand at court was even strengthened when Tsar Nicholas, against the advice of his ministers, took the step of retiring the popular Grand Duke Nicholas from the post of commander-in-chief, and himself assumed the supreme command of the army. It was necessary for the tsar to move to army headquarters, leaving the tsarina, the willing tool of Rasputin, to become the real ruler of the country. Moreover, Stürmer, the prime minister, was only a screen for Rasputin. This situation can be said to be the real turning point in the fate of tsardom. Indignation seized the Duma, ministers, army and people. In November 1916, the Duma had to be assembled, and Stürmer, Protopopov, and Rasputin were repudiated in strong terms. Only Stürmer

was dismissed; but, finally Rasputin was assassinated. The tsar left the front to attend Rasputin's funeral, and then for a number of weeks shut himself in his apartment and sank into complete apathy—and waited for the rage of the people to catch up with him.

Nicholas did go back to army headquarters, but the day (February 27, 1917) on which he returned great crowds marched the streets of Petrograd and called for food. At army headquarters Nicholas was informed of the demonstration and his order was to stop all disorders next day as "inadmissable in time of war." The people were fired upon by the army under command. The next day the town was crowded with mutinous soldiers who went over en masse to the Revolution. Kerensky directed the mutineers to come to the Duma and claim it. The cabinet dispersed and the Revolution spread. All army commanders save one demanded the abdication of Tsar Nicholas, and so did the Duma which sent two of its leading members to obtain abdication papers. In the meanwhile a Duma committee was appointed to take control and this in turn was followed by a Provisional Government, consisting of nearly all parties. Nicholas abdicated on March 16 in favor of his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, instead of his son Alexis. The Grand Duke did not choose to accept the Supreme Power and passed it on to the Provisional Government. Thus ended the Romanov's rule of Russia.

The Revolution was a terrible blow for the country while in the midst of war. The Provisional Government, headed by Prince Lvov as premier was in for tough sledding. Even the more socialist government formed by Kerensky in July fared little better. Just when it seemed as though it would master the Revolution, it was hampered by the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets, who had members in the Duma itself. Pares' excellent summary of the problems facing the Provisional Government is offered here:

> The Provisional Government faced three enormous tasks. First, it had to restore the whole administrative apparatus. Second, in doing this it had to satisfy the demands of the fundamental change which had taken place. Third, it set itself to keep Russian in the war, and this of itself made all the rest utterly impossible. It was a cruel thing that Russia's first attempt at constitutional rule should have had to be made at such a moment. Yet it must be remembered that after ages of longing for liberty, the Revolution was to the Russians a far bigger thing than the war itself; and immediately after the fall of Tsardom no Government could have stood which did not satisfy that longing.[93]

It is now a matter of historical record that the Provisional Government did not stand. On November 7 (October, following the old calendar) the Bolsheviks came into power with Lenin as president. Peace talks with Germany began in January, 1918, at Brest-Litovsk. This is the period which Milinkov describes as the Bolshevist Collapse in War and Triumph in Propaganda. Conclusing his discussion of how the Bolsheviks

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[93] Bernard Pares, Russia, p. 99.

were stabilizing their control of the government in spite of their weakness in war. Miliukov writes:

> The Bolsheviks were winning not so much by their own strength as by the weakness and inconsistency of their antagonists within the sphere of doctrine shared by both. They were winning in the common audience by simplicity and consistency of action, following upon that doctrine. The Socialist opponents of Bolshevism, instead of repudiating the very doctrine whose inferences clash with reality, preferred to resort to sophistic explanations which are easily used as convincing proofs of their hypocracy and selfishness, which are intended to "cheat" the proletariat.[94]

This author's thesis is that it is the Bolshevist simplicity and consistency of action, following upon the Marxist doctrine which makes Bolshevism an international danger.

The period from 1918-1921 was a highly complicated and unsettled time, sometimes designated the period of militant communism. During this period the Bolshevist political police, or GPU had its origin. Civil war and intervention by Allied forces rendered the country paralyzed. The economic blockade imposed by the Allies increased the misery caused by the breakdown of the whole system of production. There was a great shortage of food, followed by a terrible epidemic. Lenin accepted the situation for what it was and retired temporarily from the intense program of transformation. The result was the inauguration of the NEP, or new economic policy. The program permitted a return of the free market, reopening of shops

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[94] Paul Miliukov, Bolshevism: An International Danger, pp. 126-27.

in Moscow, restoration of a free pricing system, and an attempt to attract foreign capital. This relaxation of program which lasted for seven years, did not represent a change in the ultimate goal of the Bolsheviks, but was explained by Lenin as a necessary step toward that goal.

In order to carry out the new economic policy and win the civil war, Lenin expelled foreigners who might be suspect as well as internal opponents. They went as exiles into various regions of the world. Writing of the situation in Russia at this time, Pares records the following:

> Those who remained in Russia paid dearly for the rest. The Tsar with his noble family had been murdered on July 16th, 1918, in a cellar at Ekaterinberg, near the Urals, and a number of their nearest kinfolk were thrust down a deserted mine-shaft near by. Ministers and generals were killed off as reprisals for the acts of others. The possessing class had been disposed wholesale. There is no complete record of their various fates: shootings, hairbreadth escapes, humiliations, starvation.[95]

The workers in Leningrad and Kronstadt had been foremost supporters of the October Revolution. When, however, in 1921, they began to reject complete allegiance to the Party and to demand the free election of soviets, they were disposed of ruthlessly as "counter-revolutionaries". In 1923 at Easter came the two great trials of the clergy, as a demonstration of the Bolshevist opposition to religion. In the years from 1921-1928, individual farming prospered on land much of which

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95. Bernard Pares, Russia, p. 119.

had been seized by peasants at the instigation of the Bolsheviks, even before the Communist Revolution. There emerged a peasant bourgeoisie (farmers) and a peasant proletariat (rural laborers). Since the need for food all over was so great, the government considered it expedient to enter a compromise with the peasants. Accordingly, the peasants advocated a program on their own behalf which was in direct violation of the communist program, i.e. a free market, cancellation of the thrift-tax, greater freedom of choice in selection of their own candidate for office, a return of the ballot, and the equalization of the voting status of the peasant and town worker. The increasing prestige of the peasants' program tended to demoralize the Party, a fact which the repeated Party purges were powerless to remedy. All this Lenin saw. But in 1924 Lenin died, to be succeeded as Party chief by Joseph Stalin, who triumphed over the bitter opposition of Trotsky (at first a Menshevik) and his supporters. When Stalin initiated his Five-Year-Plan, the decision had been reached to cease the compromise with the peasants and to restore the leadership of the Party. Thus began the policy of throwing the peasants into collective farms which led to the exiling of thousands of "kulaks" into northern prison camps and the liquidation of an unknown number. While famine spread, Russia's attention was turned toward developing a great industrial economy, after the fashion of the western democracies.

Summarizing his treatment of the rise and development of Bolshevism, Parkes writes:

> Two conclusions, at least, can safely be drawn: that when a dictatorship denies free expression to opposition and drives them underground, they inevitably take the form of sabotage, conspiracy, and murder; and dictatorship is the end of that Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist chain of logic which began by identifying justice and truth with the will of the proletariat, proceeded by identifying the will of the proletariat with the will of a political party, and has ended by identifying the will of a political party with the will of its leader.[96]

While we would refrain from attributing all of the evils that beset Russian society in this period to the activity of the Bolsheviks, we do conclude that the Bolshevist acceptance of the idea of the proletariat in doctrinaire fashion was the basis for claiming that it was right to employ any means in the pursuit of Party goals. These means included intimidation, hate, violence, banishment of political opponents, propaganda, and the like, all of which could be justified in the framework of revolutionary ends of which the proletariat are the historic instrument.

Let us now turn to a critique of the notion of the proletariat.

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96. Parkes, Marxism: An Autopsy, p. 25.

CHAPTER III

CRITIQUE

We set out in this study to examine Karl Marx's view of the proletariat. This objective necessitated an investigation of the roots of Marxism. Coming to grips with the system of Marx as it developed, we saw the organic connection between the theory of the class struggle and the theories of historical materialism and surplus value. We learned from the theory of historical materialism that the different rôles which different classes perform in history depend upon their relation to the process of production. Here we met the proletariat as one of the two modern classes, according to Marx, produced by industrialism. The analysis of the Marxian notion of the proletariat consisted of a treatment of the component elements of the proletarian class, the function of the proletarian class, the idea of the proletarian class, and the function of that idea. We may properly turn now to an evaluation of the Marxian theory of the proletariat which must include a word about method, because, as was brought out in the exposition, the method of Marx is so thoroughly interwoven in his total thought structure. Finally, a note on the proletarian character of the Christian religion has been added.

There are students of Marxism who insist that Marx's "philosophy" (theory of history), economic theory, and sociology are so inseparable that one must accept the system as a whole or reject it as a whole.[1] This writer assumes the attitude, however, that elements of Marxism may be recognized and appropriated as useful without incurring the necessity of embracing the whole system.

1. Evaluation of Marx's Method

It is to the credit of Marx that he avoided mechanism in his system, but he fell into an equally objectionable pitfall, namely, organicism. Consequently, society is viewed as an enlarged organism, a coherent whole, the social bond being construed in biological terms. The cultural life of society is conceived as its nervous system. Society is considered a living organism, because it is composed of living units, and it is integrated by the principle which its units demonstrate. What results from this view in general, and from Marx's version of it in particular, is a blending into one great dubious synthesis a biological and cultural conception of social evolution.

We find this treatment of society as enlarged organism to be inadequate. It is true that the concept of social unity

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[1] For example, Louis B. Boudin, The Theoretical System of Karl Marx, p. 256, or Maurice Dobb, On Marxism To-day, pp. 35, 37, 39n, 56, 92, 117.

may be applied to society, but it describes a complex unity in which myriad differences of personal aptitude, disposition, and conditioning are fused into the social organization. It is a unity which incorporates social relationships and institutional patterns, the various aspects and segments of which are found to be functionally interdependent and to express the influence of a common environment and a common social inheritance. The social solidarity of society is imperfect, for it incorporates elements which are alike and unlike, and which reveal varying degrees of integration and disintegration. The social structure is unified with a multi-centered life. The numerous parts of life that constitute the unity of the social structure possess their own values, meanings and purposes, and their own techniques, a fact which makes the study of society different from the study of the physical sciences. Moreover, there is not a life cycle in the history of society comparable to the life cycle of an individual, for the life of society is continually revived.

The classical economists studied the mechanics of economic distribution and production under the capitalist system. They simply assumed, following the lead of Adam Smith, that man was an "economic being" and that he would act in terms of an enlightened self-interest.[2] Their work led to the conclusion

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[2] See Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, Book IV, Chap. 7, Book V, Chap. 1, p. 3.

that the best functioning of the economic system would result from a minimum of regulation of production and of the market; the relationships of men involved in the various phases of the economic system would, if left alone, adjust themselves automatically. The classical economists can be described as mechanists, optimists, or liberals.

Marx was concerned with the dialectics of capitalism more than with its mechanics. He attempted to discover the chief laws of the motion or development of capitalism. His search was for a social theory to free him from the supernaturalism of Hegel and his idolization of the state. While classical economists assured the immutability of human nature, Marx concluded that the individual's attitudes, ideas, and ideals depend on his times and upon his position in the productive process. Within the existing materialistic-historical situation, the individual may make his own destiny. As a social theory Marxism leads to certain predictions concerning actual sociological events. Here must be given credit for the relative soundness of its analysis of the trends in capitalist economy. Unlike the major theories preceding it, the Marxian analyses of the historical and social processes are always of a functional nature. After praising Marx for being the first to introduce the spiral conception of evolution into the domain of sociology, Loria writes:

> With the aid of this concept, strictly positive

> and scientific, Marx triumphantly overthrew, on the one hand classical economic science, taken prisoner by its own notion of a petrified society, and on the other the philosophy of law and idealist socialism which were convinced that it was possible to mould the world in accordance with the arbitrary conceptions of the thinker. Looked at in this light, the work of Marx presents a new instrument for the use of the philosophy of history and for the use of sociology; and it has contributed no less powerfully to the advance of technological science....[3]

To the degree that the theory of historical materialism is used as a principle of investigation, it is fruitful. But as has been made clear the accent in historical materialism is upon necessary, inevitable change pushing onward towards new conditions. Marx locates the necessity of social evolution in the very nature or laws of the capitalist productive system. Thus we are led to two observations. In the first place, the element of necessity in historical materialism divests it of its character as a scientific theory of investigation and gives it the robe of metaphysics, precisely what Marx was endeavoring to escape in his methodology.[4] Secondly, the element of necessity in historical materialism, from a logical viewpoint, renders the revolutionary motive in history

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3. Achille Loria, Karl Marx, p. 146.

4. H. G. Wood observes: "And the Marxist belief in predestined process is parallel to the Calvinist insistence on God's absolute sovereignty. Marxism is, in fact, Calvinism secularized, and yet not completely secularized, for submission to a process may have something of the mystic quality of submission to the will of God." Christianity and Communism, p. 4.

unnecessary. If the biographical sketch of Marx given above is recalled, it will be remembered that he had personal reasons for desiring a social change, that the need for a revolution was present in his own experience. This will explain, it would seem, Marx's quest to find a social theory that would make plain the way of the revolution. If one understands that the "powers of production" are among the fundamental forces responsible for social evolution, he has a tool to be used for social analysis and social engineering. But if he attributes to the "powers of production" an automatic, universal character, the result is a religious philosophy.

The critics of Marx's economic determinism are at pains to point out the lack of precision in Marx's own use of the terms "conditions" and "determines". Eastman writes on this point:

> Again, the idea of effective cause is confused with that of indispensable condition. It is confused by Engels in his most simple statement of the theory, and it is confused still more explicitly by Marx in his Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy—the classic passage. "The mode of production," he says, "conditions the social, political and spiritual life process...," and in the very next sentence, as though but developing the same thought: "It is not the consciousness of men which determines their existence, but on the contrary their social existence determines their consciousness." There can be no doubt here that the limiting condition and the determining cause are being interchanged without discrimination, and if the reader will take my word that this is true throughout the entire Marxian system, he will find Marx infinitely easier to read.[5]

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5. Max Eastman, ed., Capital and Other Writings by Karl Marx, p. xiii.

It is an advantage to know about the confusion in the use of "determines" and "conditions" because, ordinarily, the latter would be interpreted as meaning that the productive forces, in any given historic period, are the primary forces, forces required for all others; the former would be interpreted to mean that the existence of all historic phenomena must be inherently connected with the prevailing "mode of production".

We have seen that the "mode of production" is the ultimate decisive factor influencing the form of society, the conflicts within society, and the types of ideas that become dominant. Thus the mode of production is often referred to by Marxists as the "basis" of society, and the social relations are called the "superstructure of society". Now there is the tendency among some people to over-simplify this view and to conclude that everything in the "superstructure" is rigidly determined by the "basis". At several points an attempt is made by Marx and Engels to correct this tendency. The following quotation is from a letter to J. Block, written by Engels in September, 1890:

> According to the materialist conception of history the determining element in history is ultimately the production and reproduction in real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. If therefore somebody twists this into the statement that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms it into a meaningless, abstract, and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—political forms of the class struggle and its consequences, constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle,

> etc.—forms of law—and then even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the combatants: political, legal, philosophical theories, religious ideas and their further development into systems of dogma—also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate indetermining their form. There is an interaction of all of these elements, in which, amid all the endless host of accidents, i.e., of things and events whose inner connection is so remote or so impossible to prove that we regard it as absent and can neglect it, the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary. Otherwise the application of the theory to any period of history one chose would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree.[6]

The interpretation offered in the above letter, while clarifying, does not alter the fact that the Marxian economics is the core of the Marxian social philosophy. Therefore, if the economic views are sound, then the Marxian predictions, in general, are correct. For a long time economists have differed in their estimate of Marxian economics. A strong unfavorable judgment is given by Loria in the following statement:

> But if his sociological, historical, and technological investigations, if his studies of money, the banking system, and industrial statistics, be so many intellectual jewels of which no praise can be excessive, it is none the less true that his fundamental economic theory is essentially vitiated and sophistical, and that he himself is responsible for reducing it to hopeless absurdity. We arrive, therefore, at the remarkable result: that Marx, whose primary aim it was to be a theorist of political economy, and to deal only in subsidiary fashion with the philosophy of history and technology, secured a triumphant success in these subordinate fields;

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6. Dona Torr, ed., The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Engels, p. 475.

> whereas in respect of the fundamental object of his thought, his work was a complete failure.[7]

Other opinions might be cited in this connection which are not as emphatic as Loria's position.

We come now to the question of the soundness of any social theory offering any single motif as the "basis" of society. In his book, Social Causation, MacIver discusses this problem under the title of "The Key Cause". He points out that there have been numerous attempts to designate some particular principle, activity, or conjecture as to the key to social change. Marxism is noted as one of the more famous of such attempts. The full force of MacIver's argument against the key cause is caught up in this statement:

> The economic determinists present a dogma and not a reasoned conclusion. In all the voluminous writings of Karl Marx there is nowhere any attempt to test the doctrine of the "materialistic interpretation of history". Constantly we are bidden to view events and situations in the light of the doctrine. We are told, for example, that "the ideas of freedom of thought and religion express only the dominance of free competition within the sphere of knowledge". The analogy is ingenious, if left as such. The "only" turns it into a dogma. It forbids us to view a many-angled situation from any angle but one.[8]

The further quotations should be included:

> The hypothesis that is always the same, that is always the relation of a dominant factor to subsidiary ones, is not ranked by the Marxists as a hypothesis

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[7] Loria, op. cit., p. 148.

[8] R. M. MacIver, Social Causation, p. 117.

> but always as an a priori "truth".
>
> In every problem of social causation we are confronted with a variety of factors or determinants.[9]

MacIver's point here would hardly be improved by further elaboration. It is the question of a social theory or a natural law, and economic determinism here seems to be in the dress of the latter.

Any rejection of historical materialism has to deal with the peril made graphic by Aptheker in his attack upon Gunnar Myrdal's approach in An American Dilemma. The following is a quotation from the Carnegie sponsored study which Aptheker believes reveals the philosophy of Myrdal:

> "The American Negro problem is a problem in the heart of the American.... This is the central viewpoint of this treatise." It follows from this: "What we usually call 'social trends' have their main significance for the Negro's status because of what is in the white people's minds.... The important changes in the Negro problem do not consist of or have close relations with 'social trends' in the narrower meaning of the term but are made up of changes in people's beliefs and valuations."[10]

Now Aptheker's general criticism of Myrdal's view is that it is moralistic and idealistic. Rejecting Marxian materialism, Myrdal, in Aptheker's thought, is led into subhectivism, which locates the source of a grievous social problem in the hearts of individuals who recognize the problem and feel it. The weaknesses of historical materialism must be exposed, but this

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[9] MacIver, op. cit., pp. 118-19.

[10] Herbert Aptheker, The Negro People in America, p. 20.

fact must not be interpreted as providing sanction for a subjectivism which gives rise to social passivism founded upon a failure to recognize and grapple with definite objective social conditions in time and space.

2. Evaluation of the Proletariat as a Class

Our analysis of the Marxian system revealed that two economic classes came into existence with the rise of capitalism, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Though the boundaries of the latter class are ill-defined, it consists primarily of wage-earners; those who, lacking the means of production, must sell their labor power on the market as a commodity in order to gain a livelihood for themselves and their families. As a result of its place in the production process the proletariat develops an opposition to the bourgeoisie which in time reaches the level of class antagonism which eventuates in social revolution.

In his analysis of the present-day class struggle MacIver sees a conflict in which one class is seeking a redistribution of power as much as a redistribution of wealth. Consequently, he holds that the Marxian division of society into two classes is too simple.[11] Between the wage-earners who must live

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[11] Berdyaev contends that social differentiation is effected by other things than the economic factor and relation to the production process. He writes, "Simmel's theory of social differentiation and of the forming and mixing of

almost entirely upon their wages and those who can live on the returns from capital investments, MacIver locates a large important group which is often designated the middle class.[12] His list of those who fall into this group are as follows:

entrepreneurs and business managers
merchants and retailers
professional groups
technicians
civil servants

MacIver concludes that these groups belong in the "working" class, although they have interests in common with capitalists and draw some of their income from capital. Further, the fact that they have interests other than the economic one militates against the manifestation on their part of that strict "class-consciousness" which Marx emphasized. Cole also gives attention to the question of differentiation within the proletariat. He writes:

> There is, however, another process of differentiation at work. As mechanization advances, a smaller proportion of the entire labor force is employed upon directly productive operations, and a larger portion is clerical, technical, administrative and supervisory work, and in the distribution of goods and the rendering of personal services. This process, as we have seen, is an important factor in creating a new petite bourgeoisie in place of the small masters supplanted

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groups in considerably deeper, more complex and subtler than that of Marx. The casts of India do not fit into the Marxian scheme and are unexplainable on a basis of class war, for they were determined by a religious idea." Nicholas Berdyaev, Christianity and Class War, p. 32.

[12] See MacIver, The Elements of Social Science, p. 115f.

> by the growth of large scale Capitalism. But it also creates, corresponding in some degree to the upper strata of craftsmen under the old system, an upper proletariat of "black-coats", closely akin in income and way of living to the lower strata of petite bourgeoisie as well as the upper strata of the manual workers.[13]

The author concludes that it is impossible to offer a precise definition of the limits of the proletariat and the middle class. Whether one classifies himself, under these circumstances, as in the proletarian or middle class, depends more upon how he feels about the matter than upon the economic factor. The strong likelihood is that, as long as capitalism is expanding and the upper level of manual workers and the "black-coats" see an opportunity to improve their status, they will tend to pull away from the proletariat and to consider their interests to be with the bourgeoisie. In the time of troubles these groups are likely to associate themselves with the class which gives greatest promise of advancing their interests. Now this differentiation within the modern proletariat poses a real problem for both class solidarity and class consciousness, and makes it increasingly difficult to keep alive a militant working class political party that will press on towards the revolutionary goal of communism. The growing tendency is for these groups to work for and be satisfied with legislative and economic reforms. The degree to which this

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13. G. D. H. Cole, What Marx Really Meant, p. 149.

process of differentiation within the proletariat will continue will depend largely upon the developments which take place within the capitalist system, whether it yields progressive improvements or goes into a tailspin. The general observation to be made here is that, certainly as far as modern society is concerned the Marxian class division does not fit the facts.

At points the writing of Marx conveys the impression that the class struggle is inherent in nature. It is highly probable that Marx overemphasized class consciousness at the expense of national consciousness in his own day. He did not foresee the complete development of imperialism. Marx appears to make use of the Aristotelian concept of class which is an abstraction and is static. What he says about class consciousness is true when a struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie does exist, but the two classes are not forever warring against each other. It may be granted that there are always some strikes and industrial unrest and that there are always groups of the population who are class conscious. Capitalists and workers disagree as to aims in the economic and social process. And yet this admission does not justify Marx in the attempt to abstract in the Aristotelian fashion certain universally valid generalities about classes and the class struggle. This procedure yields a society which is static and really contrary to Marxian theory. On the question of

classes and class consciousness in America, Gunnar Myrdal has some relevant material.[14] His general point of view is that Marx's concept of "class struggle" minimizes the distinctions which exist within the two main groups, exaggerates the extent of the gulf separating them, and gives a false picture of the rôle and development of the middle class. In addition, caste would seem to be more significant than class.

Whatever the attitude is that one takes towards the class divisions Marx outlined, he will note with interest the point Marx makes emphatically, namely, that in the history of society important social changes have required class action. True enough, groups may sponsor these social changes, but they will be found, according to Marx, to be representative of a class.

3. Evaluation of the Function of the Proletariat

The class struggle, according to the Marxian doctrine, leads inevitably to the dictatorship of the proletariat. The existence of the state presupposes the existence of class, but the socialist state is unique in that it will be under the domination of the proletariat. When the objective conditions are ready (numerous, enlightened, and disciplined proletariat, conscious of the existing class struggle and of its fundamental

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[14] Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma, I, 673-76.

needs as a participant in the productive process; the internal breakdown of the capitalist system of production resulting from the accumulation of capital; the presence of a revolutionary party which has kept aglow the revolutionary fire), the proletariat is the only class that can "take over" and lead in the successful revolution.[15] The function of the proletariat in the period of transition between capitalism and communism is to consolidate the gains of the revolution, prevent counter-revolution, re-order the productive system and its relations, and through an educational process and the instruments of culture develop the coöperative psychology which is necessary to the emergence of communism. In this new society will be found true democracy, freedom for all. There will be neither bourgeoisie nor proletariat, only the "unclassed" in a classless society. Both in the pre-revolutionary phase and the post-revolutionary phase, the proletariat is viewed as the only true instrument of social change, and the repository of the revolutionary idea.

Now a general proposition can be laid down in accordance with the Marxian position: the proletariat's historic mission is, by the violent seizure of power, to usher in a new and

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[15] Through the years a number of outstanding revisionists have stressed the evolutionary strain in Marx's thought as authentic, thereby assigning a different function to the proletariat. The works of such men as Böhm-Bawerk, Edward Bernstein, Karl Kautsky, Werner Sombart, Jean Jaures, Alfred Nossig, et al, are important in this connection.

more democratic social order, in which the individual may enjoy a larger measure of life. This is class action which gives promise of glorious benefits for all the people. This raises two questions in my mind. My first question is, Are the classic virtues of life ever a matter of group monopoly? The second question is, What happens to the individual in the Marxian scheme? In reference to the first question, Berdyaev argues that revolutions, as well as ordinary political life, have a class character. In addition, revenge appears as a motive in every revolution. He writes:

> In the history of revolutions, whatever symbolism they adopt, under whatever standard of ideas they gather, it is always oppressed and enslaved classes revolting against privileged and governing classes; there is always an emergence from the collective subconsciousness of the people of a demand for compensation for their heaped-up grievances and for the humiliations they have undergone.[16]

In order to get a glimpse at the way the class ethic operates in Russia, let us admit the testimony of E. Stanley Jones:

> The Communists allow every nationality within the USSR to develop its nationality and culture and language. There is no distinction made on account of race and color. Everything is open on equal terms. But having acknowledged all of this, one is bound to note that it is one particular class that is doing all of this, a class which regards itself as a messianic class—the proletariat. In all their plays and cinemas and posters the

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[16] Nicholas Berdyaev, Christianity and Class War, p. 17; see also John C. Bennett, Christian Ethics and Social Policy, p. 21.

> proletariat is the hero and the bourgeois is the villain. All the virtues reside in one class and all the vices in the other.[17]

One is likely to conclude, I think, after reading his work, that Marx idealized the proletariat. As a group, the proletariat can hardly be more immune to the ravages of greed, selfishness, and love of power than any other class, especially since the proletariat do not live and work in a social vacuum, but rather in a social situation in which these human ills have already left their impression upon the social process and upon the human beings who participate in it. As far as Russian is concerned, one must be ready to accord her due credit for the great strides she has made in guaranteeing equality and justice to all the people. In view of our discussion in the second chapter, however, one is forced to raise the question whether a class which penalizes and punishes and liquidates people or another class, from political motives, is prepared to fulfill the rôle assigned to the proletariat in the Marxian system.

We turn now to the second question. What happens to the individual in the Marxian system? Marx's attention is directed almost exclusively to classes. His turning from dialectical idealism to dialectical materialism made possible, also, a certain coldness in the application of his theory. And yet

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17. E. Stanley Jones, Christ's Alternative to Communism, p. 203.

Marx did recognize the existence of the individual. In the Communist Manifesto we read:

> You must, therefore, confess that by "individual" you mean no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle class owner of property. This person must, indeed, be swept out of the way, and made impossible.[18]

One selection is sufficient to indicate what is Marx's characteristic viewpoint regarding the individual's mode of life:

> The transformation, through the division of labor, of personal powers [relationships] into material powers, cannot be dispelled by dismissing the general idea from one's mind, but only by action of individuals in again subjecting these material powers to themselves and abolishing the division of labor. This is not possible without the community.[19]

Marxism admits the existence of men as well as of classes. It admits the right of men to make their history, but it affirms that they make it primarily in the economic sphere. Accordingly, the real individual in bourgeois society is the bourgeois; the proletarian is denied that status by virtue of his relation to the productive process. And it is only by acting at the proper time that he can change the production relations so that he may be an individual in the community. Howard Selsam has very eloquently and clearly expounded the ethics of socialism. In his treatment of society and the individual, two points stand out. Socialism is inimical to the kind of social atomism, often known as individualism, which

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[18] Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto, p. 25.

[19] Marx, The German Ideology, p. 74.

has gained ascendancy in the society growing around capitalism; and, socialism does not believe that capitalism, in view of its very nature, can promote the growth of a society in which the maximum opportunity will be accorded all individuals to live a rich and full life. Selsam writes:

> For socialism does not wish society to return to a primitive form for which the individual is nothing and the group or clan everything, but desires to advance to that fuller development of the individual personality that man's mastery of his productive forces now makes possible. The material condition for this higher synthesis of the individual and society is the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the social ownership of the instruments of production. The ethical expression of this material basis is found in the individual with a full consciousness of his place in society and with his resulting social responsibilities, and in the recognition on the part of collective man, or society, of its responsibility for the care and development of every single individual personality.[20]

Having discarded belief in God, Marxism points to a scientific ordering of the economic system as the way by which that condition of man will be produced which, in religious circles, is called the brotherhood of man. As has been observed, the highest evaluation is placed, not upon the individual man, but upon a class—the proletariat. Thus while asserting and defending the rights of the community, the Soviet government can deal ruthlessly with individual men, for they possess no supreme worth within themselves as individuals—a notion contrary to one of the cardinal principles of the Christian

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20. Howard Selsam, Socialism and Ethics, p. 143.

religion. The very profound question posed by Marxism at this point which is so relevant to our times is this one: how may we guarantee equality and justice to each individual in the community, and also political liberty?[21] How may we order our economic system so that maximum opportunities will accrue to all men to satisfy their interests and proper needs without simultaniously producing social conditions that will preclude the growth of individuality?

Some of the critics of Marxism, having established to their satisfaction the weakness of the theory of value, conclude that the whole Marxist system must be abandoned. It is true the theory of value is used by Marx as a means of interpreting economic phenomena, but it plays no rôle whatsoever in his socialistic doctrine.[22] Marx's socialism is founded upon historical materialism. It is well to remember, in this connection, that the fundamentals of Marxist socialism are to be found in The Communist Manifesto, in which the theory of

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[21] On this question Carr's book, The Soviet Impact on the Western World, p. 101: "The strong point of the Soviet Ideology is that it has been framed in response to the new conditions of mass civilization, and that it has arisen in a country where the sense of community has always been more active than the sense of individual rights.... It looks as if the western world will have to develop a stronger sense of the duty of the individual to society, and the Soviet Union a stronger sense of the obligations of society to the individual."

[22] See V. G. Simkhovitch, Marxism Versus Socialism, p. 254, or E. von Böhm-Bawerk, Karl Marx and the Close of His System, p. 16.

value is not found. McConnel, assistant professor of sociology in New York University, writes a very interesting passage:

> Another deviation from the classical doctrine is found in the work of Karl Marx and other socialists. The socialists extended the labor theory of value to further limits, using it as a tool both in an economic and ethical sense to prove their contention that rent, interest, and profit were unjustifiable charges upon the true values created by labor alone.[23]

Regardless of what position we take toward the economic views of Karl Marx, we can hardly dispose of his burning zeal for social and economic reform with a snap of the finger.

Lewis Corey, who is not a communist, wrote a book in 1934, titled The Decline of American Capitalism, in which he expressed the view that "Marx, in fundamental theory and analysis, is more contemporary than contemporary bourgeois economists." It is the purpose of Corey's book to demonstrate, through the use of the American statistical method, that American industry authenticates the analysis Karl Marx made of the laws of capitalist production. He uses the concept of surplus value and in discussing the prosperity of capitalism, writes:

> The whole tendency of capitalist production is to displace workers who consume with mechanical equipment which does not consume. But who is to consume the abundance? The equipment does not. The workers cannot, because of low wages and disemployment. For the workers to consume more is unprofitable; it means more employment and higher wages and affects

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[23] John W. McConnell, The Basic Teachings of the Great Economists, p. 27.

> the "economy" of displacing labor with equipment. By its greed for surplus value capitalist production develops the conditions which increasingly make surplus value unrealizable as profit.... Capitalist production reacts against abundance and resorts to planned limitation of output.[24]

Corey sees in the insistence of capitalists upon obtaining increased surplus value, in the face of a steadily contracting and weakening consumer market, a condition which is working for the decline of capitalism. Another book, Into Abundance (1940), written by Loren K. Ostergaard, is in the same mood as Corey's book. He points to the conflict that has developed in Western society between the evolutionary forces that work toward plenty for all and the reactionary forces that seek to maintain the order of scarcity.

When the critical evaluation of the economic views of Karl Marx has been completed the moral challenge of those views remains.

4. Evaluation of the Proletariat, as Idea

It has been made clear in the course of this study that the new order, according to Marxian theory, is to be inaugurated by the efforts of the proletariat and that the use of violence is inescapable; it is believed to be a necessary

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[24] Lewis Corey, The Decline of American Capitalism, p. 480. A long list of books could be added here. See, for instance, S. and B. Webb, The Decay of Capitalist Civilization; T. Veblen, The Vested Interests and the Common Man, or The Dynamics of Industrial Democracy, by C. S. Golden and Harold J. Ruttenberg, and The Acquisitive Society, by R. H. Tawney.

means. This notion is an integral part of Marx's system of thought, and we saw in Chapter II how it served as an "energizing principle." The movement of history, in the thought of Marx, is dialectic and therefore revolutionary in character. And, as Marx looked at the state he was more impressed by its coercive features than by its humanitarian features. Moreover, Marx lived in a day when the traditions of violent revolution were common to all classes. He was a child of 1789 and he was an observer of the revolutionary activities of 1848. The French revolution served as his model of social advance. Finally, his hatred of oppression and degrading poverty, giving rise to feelings of revolt as it did, had a grounding in very personal experience. One can hardly avoid raising the question as to whether violence is the only means to achieve the ends of communism, or the most effective means. Again, one may legitimately inquire whether history has authenticated this rôle which Marx attributes to the proletariat.

A rebuttal to Marx's argument about the state would require an actual observation of the functioning of the modern state. For the general proposition that the modern state is more highly developed in terms of its social service activities than the state in the nineteenth century, assent should be readily granted. But the final test of the validity of Marx's notion of the state must be found by an analysis of the daily activities of the legislature, the courts, and the

executive bodies of a given country. The irrefutable definition of the state is revealed in precisely what the state does.

Assuming the correctness of Marx's view of the state, what shall be our attitude toward the use of violence as a means of dislodging the state? It is significant that Marx never entertained a theoretical discussion of the use of force. The use of force was treated against the background of experience with certain states and in view of the presence or absence of definite objective conditions. Marx does not make a fetich of the use of force nor can he be classified as an advocate of such an instrument as the modern putsch. He believed only in the successful use of force, and this use, in Marx's system, is dedicated to the liberation of the productive capacities of society from the repression of an out-worn system of production. So the use of violence, as a means, is justified by the end it serves. If the use of force actually achieves higher social and moral ends, then the results will be their own argument. For concrete material, though not proof, we turn to Russia, in this connection, because it is the one great contemporary state that has attempted to apply the teachings of Marxism. Writing about communism in Russia, Jerome Davis says:

> It is commonly said that the end justifies the means. But violence makes absolutely impossible the highest end until a better end is found. In other words, belief in a force psychology may finally prove fallacious. To be sure the Bolsheviks do not believe in revolution until it can be successful,

> and it is generally true that the masses of mankind are too patient and long-suffering to revolt unless there exists real injustice. On the other hand, the preaching of the doctrine that little or no progress can come outside of Russia except by violence and bloody revolutionary movement is preposterous.[25]

The theory is, of course, that the workers are suffering at the hands of the capitalists, so injustice justifies the use of revolutionary violence. Here one realizes that while condemning the use of violence as a means of achieving social change, he cannot condone the instability, the economic crises and catastrophes, and the injustice which inspire its use.

It would appear that the Marxian emphasis upon the necessity of a proletarian revolution has had two effects, a positive and a negative. Undoubtedly many farmers and the middle classes have been alienated by the revolutionary motif in Marxism, for they have more to lose than their chains. It is also probably true that groups from these classes, out of fear of revolution and civil war have gravitated towards fascist movements and circles of thought. To the extent that this kind of thing has happened the Marxian insistence upon revolutionary violence has been a stumbling block to the progressive movement in politics and economics.

On the other hand, the idea that the proletariat has been chosen by History to be the guide to the new society by way of class warfare, revolution, and dictatorship, has had its

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25. Jerome Davis, Contemporary Social Movements, p. 412.

more favorable outcomes. We have seen that Marxism is not so much a science as a realistic method of social action. It is not only a rational system, but a psychological force. Hook suggests that what justifies Marx and Engels in advocating the revolutionary idea as the decisive factor in social life is the fact that there is available the potential of "the revolutionary will of the proletariat which is prepared to act upon that assumption."[26] What is right, here, is to assist the historical process to fulfill its predestined end, and what is wrong is to oppose or retard that fulfillment. What is historically inevitable must be morally right. The objective truth of Marxism realizes itself in the informed revolutionary act. If, then, the proletariat act so as to bring in a new order bearing rich rewards for all the people, that action must be accredited for its worth. On this there can hardly be debate. Again, we turn to Russia for the reason indicated above.

Marxism predicts the movement of the social process from capitalism to socialism to communism, the latter being the

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[26] Arnold J. Toynbee, A Study of History, V, 203. (In his discussion of the breakdown of civilization, Toynbee has a suggestion which is relevant here. He writes: "Broadly speaking, we may say that, when a society in process of civilization has been split by a schism which is the penalty of breakdown, the Proletariat is apt to withdraw its mimesis from all the ideals of the Dominant Minority except its worship of violence, and from all its institutions and techniques except those in which this spirit of violence is embodied.")

final stage. The present stage in Russia is avowedly not communism but a modified socialism, in which there is a "dictatorship for the proletariat." It is an incontestable fact that the application of Marxism in Russia has resulted in a highly improved standard of living and level of education for the workers and peasants. In the process members of the upper classes were liquidated by the thousands, but the great masses of Russians came into possession of a kind of life unknown to them under the tsarist regime. Whether communism—an end of all classes and the vanishing of the state—is to be achieved in Russia, only the future can reveal. If it is actually established, at some future date, one cannot resist wondering if it will prove the final form of social organization in the history of man on earth.

To the extent that Marxism has been applied in Russia, it has provided mental and moral stimulation for oppressed and exploited peoples all over the world. The appeal to workers and peasants to unite has had a tremendous influence. It has been a ferment arousing into action millions of peoples who heretofore were hopeless. The total meaning of the application of Marxism in Russia for the rest of the world cannot now be measured.

5. A Note on the Proletarian Character of Christianity

In my thinking, there is a sense in which Christianity is a proletarian religion. It is proper here to state only briefly my view on the subject which is in agreement with my statement of religious attitudes in Chapter I.

Karl Kautsky takes the position in Foundations of Christianity that the first Christian organizations among the Jews were saturated with the desire for the coming of the Messiah, for social upheaval, and that along with this desire went a kind of practical communism among the membership of the congregation who were generally poor. It was a communism of consumption and of ownership in commodities. As the revolutionary zeal waned, this practical communism underwent certain changes. It gradually became communism based on sharing common meals and their mutual charity. This form, too, later changed.[27]

Although the concept of the "proletariat" in the Communist Manifesto is not always precisely used, the concept refers generally to that class of workers, without the tools of production, that has arisen as a result of the modern capitalist "mode of production". If it be contended, then, that the proletariat are a modern working class group without a counterpart in previous history, then we may not call

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[27] Karl Kautsky, Foundations of Christianity, p. 408f.

Christianity a proletarian religion.

Positive evidence of the outreach of Jesus' life, the direction of his ministry, and the nature of his gospel is revealed in the kind of following that he attracted. In this connection, several points are suggested by Dr. McCown's book[28] in which he traces the sources and meaning of the social gospel.

Jesus was the child of the country; his public ministry was conducted in the country. Common working men were his first disciples. He was the product of the class of people who had experienced the neglect and exploitation of society, and to whom, therefore, the ideal of the simple nomadic-agricultural life made the profoundest appeal.

Jesus was called by his enemies the friend and defender of the poor, the despised, and the social outcasts, and he did not resist this designation. He found the common folk deserted and hated by their leaders, pushed aside as the wreckage of society, but glad to hear his words. So he made himself their leader.

In the course of his ministry Jesus was merciless in his castigations of the civil and religious leader for their graft and exploitation. It was this fact which drove the Saducees and Pharisees to unite in order to plot the destruction of

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[28] C. C. McCown, The Genesis of the Social Gospel.

Jesus. Jesus was crucified as an advocate of the poor and weak against the demands and exploitation of the rich and the powerful.

In view of these considerations it can be said that Christianity is a proletarian religion—proletarian as referring broadly to the dispossessed, weak, and neglected. Among such people Christianity drew its first hesitating breath.

Finally, it needs to be added that Jesus' whole teaching and attitude were in opposition to the use of force, in the sense of violence. At this point obviously Christianity would not qualify as proletarian. Jesus did not counsel inactivity and passivity, but he did rest his case upon that form of action which derives from the inward power of a spirit attuned with the spirit of the Heavenly Father.

In concluding this study of the Marxian theory of the proletariat, the last word, it seems to me, should be dedicated to Karl Marx, the man. One can hardly read his writings without feeling something of their intensity and acknowledging with appreciation the arduous labor that went into them. If Marx does not deal with the problems chosen for examination as we would like to have him do, he deserves recognition, nevertheless, for attacking great issues courageously. MacDonald has paid Marx a substantial tribute in the following words:

> Therefore I find Marx's fame and position, not in his theories and explanations (all of which are

ciety. Lenin was attacked as an enemy of the poor and weak against the strong and capitalistic [illegible] [illegible].

In view of other considerations it may be said that Bolshevism is a proletarian revolution--and--in its extreme broadly to the oppressed, weak and exploited. Among such people its popularity from its first beginning [illegible].

Finally, it seems to be true that Lenin's radical [illegible] tactics were in opposition to the way of Lenin. In the sense of [illegible]. In this rather [illegible] the [illegible] would not qualify as [illegible]. Lenin did not [illegible] and [illegible], for he did not [illegible] upon the [illegible] form of government derived from the [illegible] power of [illegible] with the [illegible] of the [illegible].

In conclusion this study of the [illegible] theory of the proletariat, the [illegible], it seems to me, should be [illegible] to [illegible]. [illegible] never [illegible] his writings without [illegible] of [illegible] and [illegible] with [illegible] the [illegible] later [illegible] than, [illegible] with the [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible], the [illegible] [illegible] in the [illegible].

[illegible] I [illegible] in his [illegible] and [illegible].

> subject to the limitations of the thought, knowledge and politics of his time, and to his own errors, and none of these will survive the reconsideration of future times), but, as I have said, in the simple fact that he imparted to the working-class movement and to Socialism a greatness and a majesty in the evolution of human society, and gave it a method which sustained hopes for a prolonged conflict. That is why the fate of Marx's theory of value or economic determinism will have no effect upon the place he occupies amongst the leaders of mankind. It is not Marxism that survives but Marx.[29]

In the field of social activity phenomena are so intermingled that it is very difficult to distinguish between cause and effect. In a system of thought carefully wrought, Marx gave his analysis and solution to the most pressing ills of his time. It is conceivable that today we may reject both his analysis and his solution, but we can salute him, nevertheless, for stating the problem and bringing it forcibly to world attention. He brought the fate of the common man to the forefront of social discussion. Turning the spotlight from the bright heroes of history, Marx focussed it upon the great mass of workers as real actors in the human drama, and upon their claim to larger social benefits.

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29. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, Socialism: Critical and Constructive, p. 53.

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